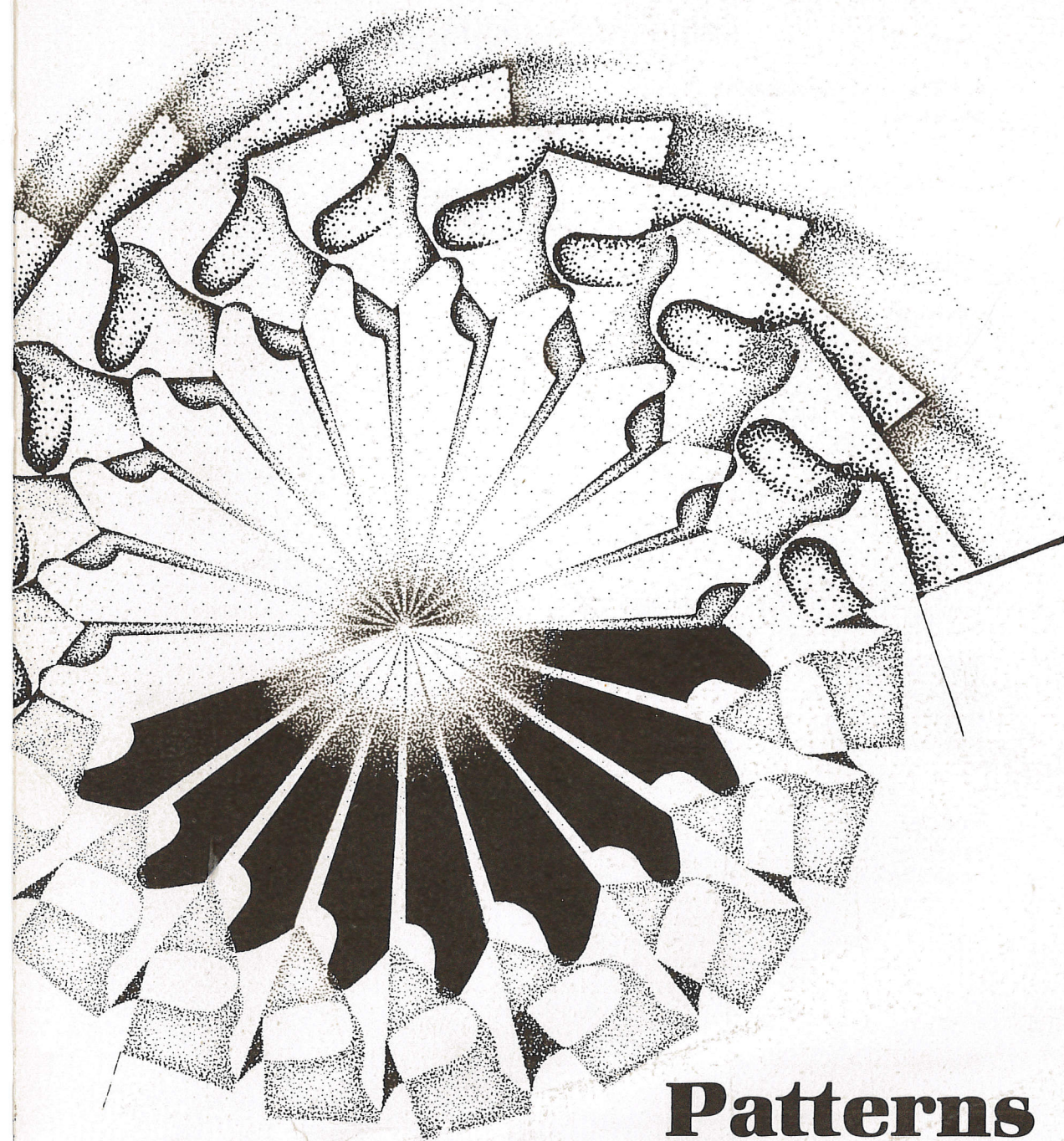




# **Patterns**

**Thirty-second Edition**

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

## Critical and Interpretive Essays

|                      |                                                                             |                  |
|----------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------|
| First Place:         | "Broken Blossoms"                                                           | Nancy Osborn     |
| Second Place:        | "The Merry Wives of Windsor, Yesterday, Today<br>and Tomorrow"              | Stephanie McGraw |
| Selections of Merit: | "Sidney Lanier"                                                             | Madonna Franklin |
|                      | "Hemingway's Use of Narrative Distance<br>in 'A Clean, Well-Lighted Place'" | K. C. Lazzari    |
|                      | "A Bonding of Movements"                                                    | Mark Hoewisch    |
|                      | "English and Science Fiction"                                               | Jo Ann Clute     |

## Personal Essays

|                      |                                                                              |                       |
|----------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| First Place:         | "The Thank-You"                                                              | Cathee Roehrig        |
| Second Place (tie):  | "A Case Study of Generations in Conflict<br>or The Pin-Striped Suit Dilemma" | Shelby J. Clark       |
|                      | "In Praise of Uniformity"                                                    | Cathee Roehrig        |
|                      | "Committed to a Cause"                                                       | C. Johnette Pritchett |
| Selections of Merit: | "Transitions"                                                                | Jenine Watson         |
|                      | "Dane's Joke"                                                                | Mary Ann Combs        |
|                      | "Death in the Classroom"                                                     | Cathee Roehrig        |
|                      | "Crime Doesn't Pay...Or Does It?"                                            | C. Johnette Pritchett |
|                      | "It Was the day before Christmas Eve<br>and he was home!"                    | Jacqueline McAlpine   |
|                      | "Mrs. D."                                                                    | Cathee Roehrig        |
|                      | "Why Horror?"                                                                | Robert Golm           |
|                      | "Textured Memories"                                                          | Shelby J. Clark       |

## Short Story

|                      |                       |                    |
|----------------------|-----------------------|--------------------|
| First Place:         | "The Couch"           | Diane Ramey        |
| Second Place:        | "Dealing with Things" | Diane Ramey        |
| Selections of Merit: | "Bomb"                | Edward Romero      |
|                      | "Orders"              | Kathleen McConnell |
|                      | "Robert"              | Anna Naruta        |

## Poetry

|                      |                                |                    |
|----------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------|
| First Place:         | "The Egg-Shaped Tree"          | Kathleen McConnell |
| Second Place (tie):  | "Love in the Antique Boutique" | Eric Halamka       |
|                      | "Winter Sunrise"               | K. C. Lazzari      |
|                      | "A Breeze at Midnight"         | Kathleen McConnell |
| Selections of Merit: | "I Saw the Dream"              | Eric Halamka       |
|                      | "Eden Damnation"               | Edward Romero      |
|                      | "Just to Say"                  | Kathy Megauck      |
|                      | "Rage"                         | Mark Hoewisch      |
|                      | "The Highway"                  | K. C. Lazzari      |

## Theme: Perspectives

|                    |                             |               |
|--------------------|-----------------------------|---------------|
| First Place (tie): | "Perspectives #1"           | Eric Halamka  |
|                    | "From Nothingness an Image" | James Hibbert |
| Second Place:      | "Choices?"                  | Mark Hoewisch |

|                                 |                    |
|---------------------------------|--------------------|
| <b>Eleanor B. Mathews Award</b> | Kathleen McConnell |
|                                 | Diane Ramey        |



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The 32nd Edition  
of

# PATTERNS

A Publication of  
St. Clair County Community College  
Port Huron, Michigan

## PREFACE

I feel that art has something to do with achievement of stillness in the midst of chaos. A stillness which characterizes prayer, too, and the eye of the storm. I think that art has something to do with an arrest of attention in the midst of distraction.

—Saul Bellow

A picture is not thought out and settled beforehand. While it is being done it changes as one's thoughts change. And when it is finished, it still goes on changing, according to the state of mind of whoever is looking at it.

—Pablo Picasso

The 32nd edition of **PATTERNS** is an attempt by SCCCC students towards stillness in a disordered world. The works contained in this publication represent bits of order created for moments of reflection, both for artist and admirer. They reflect the power of the written word and brush stroke in bringing meaning to the physical and spiritual world that all mankind inhabits.

This edition's theme **Perspectives** represents the basic principle that underlies all art: the point of view the artist takes on a given subject and how that shapes what he has to say. Many of the works will present subjects in a new way, while other works may touch on familiar thoughts and feelings. The synthesis of the familiar and unfamiliar makes for a safe journey through these works, and one that will be at once comfortable, yet enlightening.

In preparation of this edition, numerous distractions of life kept the continual step-by-step process for artist, faculty and staff challenging, yet attainable. The finished product represents the dedication of these people and the willingness to share their time and insights for a project that has come to be recognized as an example of the quality of student and faculty on this campus.





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# IN MEMORIAM

His life touched everyone in some way at the college; his work reached out far into the community and the entire thumb district. For 22 years he was Director of Information Services at St. Clair County Community College, and during that time Thomas G. Sicklesteel became, for many people, Mr. SCCCC, a man without equal in his commitment and dedication to the college. His unexpected death on August 6, 1990, left a void in the college and in the hearts of all who knew him.

Tom Sicklesteel was a gentle, caring man who served as spokesperson for the college in many ways. He prepared news releases, answered questions, greeted students and guests, wrote copy, introduced speakers, talked with representatives of press and radio, directed revision of the college catalog, and in numerous ways spread the news about the value of the college to others. His help, advice, and work on and for PATTERNS over the years has been invaluable. His faith in possibilities exceeded the expectations of many; his was the voice of calm and reason during tough, unreasonable times. Nor will anyone forget how, at every graduation ceremony, his clear resonant voice read the names of graduates with conviction and pride in each person's individual achievement. He was the voice of St. Clair County Community College.

His service to the college was exemplary. He worked closely with the president, other administrators, and trustees, and just as closely with the faculty and various branches of the support staff. He valued the efforts of each person: no job was insignificant; all were part of the team working toward a common goal. He showed us this truth in his own work. He could be seen sorting mail in the morning or answering calls at the switchboard. He could be found clipping articles in his office or talking to others in the hall. He would drop in to chat with an instructor or stop by to share a few moments with a member of the staff. Those who knew him well will miss his wry sense of humor, and smile that lit his face as he shared a story or made an observation that touched the heart or humor of the listener. He seemed to be everywhere, and he put everyone at ease -- even in troubled times.

His leadership was marked by honesty, fairness, respect for all. He always had time to listen to others, to help find solutions to problems, or to do the work himself if no other way was possible. In managing publications, he determined needs, wrote ads, took pictures, assembled materials, contacted people, supervised layout and printing. He arranged for meetings, dinners, receptions, conferences, and graduations. And he did it all with a great love for the institution and all the people in it. He walked among us all as would a Lincoln - quietly reminding us through his actions of the courage it takes to do what's needed in our daily lives. And he did it all with the joy that finds value in work well done.

Most of all, he was a loving family man. His wife Betty was always by his side; they sustained one another with a rare blend of grace and harmony. Their family consists of two daughters, their spouses, and a granddaughter. The college was his extended family. He was concerned not only for the well-being of the college but for the well-being of all who worked or attended classes here. He took a personal interest in people, all people. Tom Sicklesteel's life was distinguished by a rare and remarkable combination of simplicity and dignity, fidelity and belief. He walked among us all with firm and equal step; he was an uncommon man who kept the common touch.

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# DEDICATION

The 32nd edition of PATTERNS honors Dr. Richard L. Norris, who retired June 30, 1990, after 20 years as president of the college. Perhaps Emerson's statement, "The reward of a thing well done is to have done it," best sums up Dr. Norris's career in higher education. His record is impressive. His leadership was marked with conviction, commitment, and challenge. His achievements were the result of diplomacy and dedication. The legacy he leaves is his belief in the individual and in education. During his tenure, he has been responsive to student and community needs and responsible for the redesigning of Port Huron Junior College into St. Clair County Community College.

One of his final acts as college president was presiding at a ceremony designating the Main Building as a historical site, a most fitting closure to his career in education. This historic building, which once housed Port Huron High School, is where the college, as part of Port Huron Area School District, held its first classes in 1923. That year 34 students enrolled in the 16 classes offered in rhetoric, biology, chemistry, history, French, mathematics, and harmony. The college was staffed by a director and seven faculty members who were all part time. Accredited that first year by the University of Michigan, the junior college received its first North Central Accreditation in 1930. For over 40 years Port Huron Junior College was recognized for its tradition of academic excellence.

This tradition created a strong, viable base for the transition in 1968 to a county-wide community college that provided vocational programs as well as the traditional transfer program. It was a time throughout the state and nation when community colleges were changing the scope and concept of higher education. When Dr. Norris became president, he assumed a distinctive leadership role in redefining the programs and values of this institution. Such leadership has not always been easy; change rarely is. Yet he persevered, and, with the help of many people, this college grew.

Now the college which began on the fourth floor of Main Building has a beautifully landscaped downtown campus and several off-campus centers serving the people and communities of the entire Thumb area. The Main Building, which houses administrative office, is where Dr. Norris has worked tirelessly and selflessly for the college, building with vision and vitality not only an extended campus and expanded curriculum but a master plan that assures students, faculty, and community that the college values excellence, challenge, accessibility, and caring in its educational programs.

The designation of the Main Building as a historic landmark is significant for Dr. Norris in at least two other ways, both closely related. One is his interest in history, especially that of the area and the college, and the second is his interest in the



alumni of the college. With the help of his secretary Isabelle Dewey, he gathered information, books, and pictures about the history of the college, and shared it with local groups when asked. A few years ago the establishment of the Alumni Association fulfilled another personal and professional goal. These interests reveal his dedication to continuity as well as to change. His achievements in guiding the growth of the college have been made through his rare ability to keep an eye on the heritage of the past as well as on the legacy to be given to the future.

PATTERNS magazine began in 1958, and its 32 editions also testify to these percepts of change and continuity. Almost 10 years ago, when faced with a lack of funding to continue, faculty and administrators, including Dr. Norris, led the way by becoming patrons, personally contributing to the continuation of the publication. At that time Dr. Norris expressed his belief in the value of this publication of creative arts for the students and the college, adding that he often sent copies to other colleges. Of even more significance, he has supported the creative arts at the college through his attendance at concerts, plays, art shows, drama festivals, and PATTERNS' receptions. He has been a role model, always ready to give warm words of welcome and encouragement to others. And at every Friends of the Arts Brunch at the River Crab, Dr. Norris was there: waiting tables, working in the kitchen, greeting people. For him, creative arts at the college create the cultural heartbeat of the campus.

For his years of excellent leadership as president of the college, for his challenge to staff and students to find ways to continue this excellent publication, for his accessi-

lity as a friend and patron of the creative arts, and for his caring concern and commitment to help us become the best that we can all be, we dedicate this edition of PATTERNS to Dr. Richard L. Norris.



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# Broken Blossoms

by Nancy Osborn

**Broken Blossoms** is a story of racial intolerance, brutish force and ultimately man's inhumanity to man; however, D.W. Griffith uses more than a simple story line to impart these themes to his audience. By intertwining psychological symbols, foreshadowing, physical action, props, specific film techniques and music, Griffith reinforces his message in a powerful and moving way.

As in all good literature, Griffith uses foreshadowing to great advantage. With the haunting sound of a solitary bell, the opening scenes sound a death knell and foretell the tragic ending of **Broken Blossoms**. Yellow Man is initially shown to be a gentle man who only wishes to spread the message of peace, yet even he is not immune to an innate violence, foreshadowed in his altercation with the English sailors. It appears again when he takes the gun from his trunk to avenge the harm done to Lucy by Battling Burrows. More noticeable is his chivalrous nature which is brought to the forefront as he heroically places himself between Lucy and Evil Eye who is making lewd advances toward the innocent child. In true gentlemanly fashion, he then steps discreetly aside to let Lucy pass unhindered. Griffith uses this moment to show us what lengths Yellow Man is willing to go to protect the love of his life; however, an undercurrent of violence was apparent just moments before in the film. As Lucy stood

next to the shopkeeper's stall, a bouquet of fragrant flowers at her elbow, the lurking image of Evil Eye was projected between the battered child and her unobtainable dream of tranquil beauty. Later in the film a shattered teacup in Yellow Man's room symbolizes the broken blossoms of hopes and dreams held by the star-crossed Lucy and Yellow Man and foreshadows their tragic end.

These subtle messages are reinforced with the film's musical score. Griffith chose his music well, using not only melody, but specific instruments as leitmotifs for his film. Lilted violins and gentle woodwinds tenderly woo us in poignant scenes depicting Yellow Man and Lucy. Bows draw heavily across the strings of the bass violas to warn us of the impending brutishness of Battling Burrows while the addition of tympani drums underscores his violence toward Lucy and his boxing opponents. Bassoons play a puckish melody when Evil Eye and the Spying One work their conniving mischief. But perhaps the most haunting musical motif occurs when violins and bell chimes combine in a hushed lullaby as Lucy cradles the doll which Yellow Man has given her.

At times Griffith uses specific filming techniques to reinforce the themes of **Broken Blossoms**. Battling Burrows is often framed in a narrow vertical strip flanked by two black strips, depicting his narrow-minded bigotry and intolerance. Griffith literally puts Yellow Man up against a wall as the character reflects on the hopelessness and waste of his life. A few scenes later, Griffith depicts Lucy and Yellow Man gazing at each other through the shop window, separated by forces that are unseen yet undeniably strong. The horror of Lucy's beatings are made more evident by the rapid fades to black as she loses consciousness. Closeups of Lucy and Yellow Man are made more poignant by the soft focus of their faces with iris shots.







Interestingly, Griffith uses identical closeup shots of Yellow Man and Battling Burrows to portray opposite emotions in two different scenes. The shot showing Yellow Man advancing toward Lucy as she lies on his bed invokes a feeling of fright; however, the mood changes as Yellow Man realizes his movements are unintentionally terrifying Lucy, so he instead tenderly kisses the hem of her sleeve. Later in the film Battling Burrows moves toward the camera in an identical fashion, but this time the audience knows Lucy's terror is totally justified. A chilling sense of anguish is accomplished in the juxtaposition of Lucy's screams of terror with Yellow Man's cries of grief.

This tragic tale is furthered by Griffith with sets, props and physical action. The opium house and its lurid dealings symbolize the sordidness of life. Rigid brick walls and floors and hard wooden furniture emphasize the cruel hardness in Lucy's life. Deserted streets point up the utter loneliness Yellow Man and Lucy experience in their unhappy lives. A zealous missionary tract emphasizes Yellow Man's personal hell and points out the irony of his own early missionary dreams. A twist on this religious theme occurs in the temple-like surroundings of Yellow Man's room where Lucy is placed on a high altar/bed surrounded with candles and incense. His offering to Lucy of the doll she had admired in his shop window subtly conveys his wish to give her a child that would bring her joy and love. Lucy's instantly maternal reactions to the doll bring the psychological scenario full circle. The ultimate tragedy of the film is preceeded by Lucy's entrapment in the closet like an animal awaiting death at the hands of her brutal hunter. The pair of shoes hanging above her as she crouches against the wall symbolize her downtrodden fate at the hands of her brutal father. Even the door to Lucy's home serves as a strong reminder of racial intolerance as Yellow Man is forced to come to her rescue through a side win-

dow.

In ways that are perhaps ahead of his time, Griffith uses psychological messages through-out **Broken Blossoms** to reinforce his plea for tolerance. Battling Burrow's frustrations with his manager and life in general are taken out on the weaker Lucy. Lucy, in turn, has been so deprived of affection she does not dare touch another human until Yellow Man gives her the tenderness she is starving to know. In one brief moment she reaches out to Yellow Man and caresses his cheek in gratitude. Later she attempts to use the same touch to appease Battling Burrows and avoid receiving his fatal blows. Her sordid life gives her little reason to smile, making it necessary to create an artificial one. Yellow Man's tenderness to her makes it possible for Lucy to smile naturally on two occasions, but even that ability disappears after Battling Burrows forcefully drags her back to their hovel. Her final smile to the world is once again forced upon her face as she dies alone, unaware that Yellow Man is desperately trying to rescue her. He, in turn, dies a lonely death as he looks on Lucy's peaceful form and smiles plaintively, ending the pain the have both felt for too long.

Stories similar to **Broken Blossoms** have been told for centuries, but Griffith, a master of direction and vision, was the first to relate the themes with such diversity. The tools and techniques afforded him by film making have given world audiences a powerful film whose message is impossible to ignore. Film Directors since Griffith's time have often tried to emulate his genius, but few have achieved success.



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# The Merry Wives of Windsor Yesterday, Today, and Tomorrow

by Stephanie McGraw

No matter what the year, be it 1597 or 1989, human beings are essentially the same. Humans experience love, hate, lust, fear, joy, sadness, and a whole host of common emotions. The human link across ages does not only encompass emotions. Many human actions, circumstances, and affairs are universal. The quest for money, marriage, and courtship are human affairs that are as much alive today as they were three hundred years ago. The basic content of human nature does not change. Shakespeare's plays are very attuned to this universality. **The Merry Wives of Windsor** is a play that is timeless because the themes and commentary on life and the affairs of humans apply to every group of people in every age.

One aspect of human life that Shakespeare addresses in **The Merry Wives of Windsor** is the institution of marriage. The methods and reasons for marrying have changed since Shakespeare's time, but the bond that the institution represents hasn't. In the time period of **The Merry Wives of Windsor**, love wasn't a major consideration in marriage. This is evidenced by the fact that Mrs. Page and her husband each are arranging to have their daughter, Anne, married. Mrs. Page is arranging a match with Dr. Caius, while Mr. Page is scheming to match her with Slender. Neither parent takes into account Anne's feelings. Anne wanted a marriage of love to Fenton. Her parents wanted her to marry for social position. This struggle and triumph that Anne experienced occurs today. Even though not a majority, many people today marry for money or social position rather than love. Some individuals today often stay in loveless marriages rather than lose status and

income. As shown by Shakespeare, love wasn't, and still isn't, in many cases, a prerequisite to marriage.

As **The Merry Wives of Windsor** is a play about marriage, Anne and Fenton display the importance of parental approval in marriage. Today, as in Anne Page's time, young couples want parental approval and blessing on their chosen mate. When approval isn't given, many couples elope in order to be together. Anne and Fenton had to elope in order to be together and avoid Anne's forced marriage to another man.

You would have married her most shamefully, where there was not proportion held in love. The truth is she and I ... are now so sure that nothing can dissolve us. Th' offense is holy that she hath committed ... a thousand irreligious cursed hours which forced marriage would have brought upon her.  
(V.v. 221-30)

Anne and Fenton ran off during the fairy play to achieve happiness together. Once they returned married, no one could do anything about the union. People today still marry hurriedly or secretly in order to avoid disapproval. Although parental approval isn't as important now as it was in Shakespeare's time, it is still a good asset to a marriage. Couples need to be brave to survive family dislike or intolerance of a mate.

Another aspect of marriage that Shakespeare's characters display is jealousy. This occurrence is a prevalent, if not even more so today, as it was when Falstaff fed Mr. Ford's jealousy. Insecurity





can often times lead to jealousy in a relationship. This especially occurred in the play because marriages at that time weren't based on love. Even before he gathers any facts, he doubts her and is quick to judge. "I do not misdoubt my wife ... a man may be too confident. I would have nothing lie on my head. I can not be thus satisfied" (II.i. 185-188). It is obvious that Mr. Ford and his wife have a weak relationship. When Mr. Ford finally finds some sketchy facts, he goes as far as disguising himself and meeting with the "accused" lover, Falstaff. This scenario may seem absurd, but there are many couples today who engage in checking up on one another. Everyone today knows of someone who questions, follows, has others follow, or calls to see if their partner is where he or she is supposed to be. Sometimes people have reason to doubt the faith of their partner, while many times the doubt is unfounded as Mr. Ford's was. Many people may see an action and concoct a whole false story surrounding it. Ford may have wondered if he was amply rich, handsome, fun or desirable to his wife, or if he was so far from these qualities that his wife needed to look elsewhere for them. Thus, Ford's insecurity led to his jealousy just as insecurity does today. As in Ford's case and many today, the jealousy is often unfounded.

Coupled with Ford's insecurity is the idea of appearances. Shakespeare uses the theme that appearances aren't always as they seem to show that assumptions can be wrong, very wrong. Appearances and/or disguises play a large role in the play. First, there is the appearance of an affair between Falstaff and Mrs. Ford as well as between Falstaff and Mrs. Page. In this supposed love triangle, communication is lacking. The women are teaching an obnoxious man a lesson but don't let their husbands in on the game. As a result the women appear to be having affairs, when this idea is the farthest from their minds.

Let's be revenged on him: let's appoint him a meeting, give him a show of comfort in his suit, and lead him on with fine-baited delay ... (II.i. 93-96) Nay I will consent to act any villainy against him, that may not sully and chariness of our honesty. (II.i. 98-100)

Mrs. Ford even states of her husband, "He's as far from jealousy as I am from giving him cause, and that is an unmeasurable distance" (II.i. 103-105).

The women only appear to be unfaithful. In actuality they are not. How often do appearances in love and other actions become confused with reality? Today, as in Shakespeare's time, it is a common occurrence. Mrs. Ford and Mrs. Page easily could be two neighborhood women of upstanding morals out to prove a sick man a fool. Today, people who spend time together may be viewed as a couple, men who embrace as gay, people wearing designer clothes as rich, and those who drive old cars as poor. Are these analogies correct? Most of the time no. Appearances are deceptive as Ford and Page discovered when their wives told them the whole, true story.

Disguises like appearances can be deceptive. Mrs. Ford and Mrs. Page disguised their feelings and actions. Ford disguises his identity to learn about his wife and Falstaff's affair. Falstaff is disguised many times to keep the affairs going and his plots secret. Anne is disguised as a fairy in order to marry her true love. Today also people disguise their feelings, sometimes their appearance and everything imaginable. Disguises can lead to troubles they did for the characters of the play. Sometimes it is difficult to see where one disguise ends and the truth begins. Many times disguises don't have as happy endings as the ones in Shakespeare's play.

Shakespeare shows that human fidelity is lasting for the most part. Trapped in loveless marriages and having husbands who are away a lot leaves much room for Mrs. Page and Mrs. Ford to cheat if they want to. However, these women don't cheat because they have a commitment, written or otherwise, to their husbands. Modern marriage commitments in the last few years have become very lax. Many people don't take commitment as seriously today. Shakespeare shows one that marriage was once very sacred. Today some people regard it as sacred, but many individuals in developed countries have lost this concept of the sacredness of marriage. Although this idea is sometimes non-existent, it definitely is not completely dead. On the other end of the marriage spectrum is Falstaff. He seems to have had no morals and no regard for commitment. "What an unweigh'd behavior hath this Flemish drunkard pick'd ... out of my conversation, that he dare assay me?" (II.i. 23-25). Many Falstaffs exist today both as men and women. An increasing number of individuals today, men and women, are following in his footsteps. There are many people in the

world without morals who will try to test another's morals or commitments.

Shakespeare, especially in **The Merry Wives of Windsor**, shows that women are not silent, passive, unintelligent beings. Here, it is the women who are in charge. Shakespeare was ahead of his time in his thinking. It is obvious from literature, especially Shakespeare's, that women have always been capable and intelligent, but never until recent times have they been able to sustain a long-term display of their capability. The women of the play were quite capable. One cannot doubt the ingenuity of Mrs. Ford, Mrs. Page, Anne, or even Mistress Quickly. Mrs. Ford and Mrs. Page showed how intelligent, cunning, brave, and constant, not wishy-washy, women are. Anne showed bravery and rational thinking. Mistress Quickly was a servant; she existed and worked for a living without the traditional man to take care of her. These positive characteristics of women are timeless and universal, because they always have and always will exist even though sometimes they are repressed. Women today are as capable and independent as Shakespeare's but have been allowed to show their abilities. Still, society has a difficult time leaving the idea that women are dependent. Women of all ages are sisters; they share the common bond of womanhood. The basic condition of being a woman doesn't change; only the situations confronted by women change.

To parallel the strong women, Shakespeare uses rather weak men in **The Merry Wives of Windsor**. His male characters are insecure and jealous, such as Ford. Others are basically stupid, such as Falstaff, who tries to seduce two married women who are best friends. Some characters such as Caius and Slender are weak humans who can't even court the woman that they want to marry by themselves. Even Fenton isn't brave enough to fight openly for his love. Here Shakespeare does stereotype a bit. All men aren't frail, stupid beings. Some are and some aren't, just as some women are dependent while others aren't. There always have been and always will be men who can easily be fooled.

A last issue that Shakespeare leaves with one is the comedy of the human condition. **The Merry Wives of Windsor** displays this comedy quite well. Life is funny. Humans worry about things that haven't happened, act stupidly in matters of all kinds, and exaggerate. Mrs. Ford and Mrs. Page

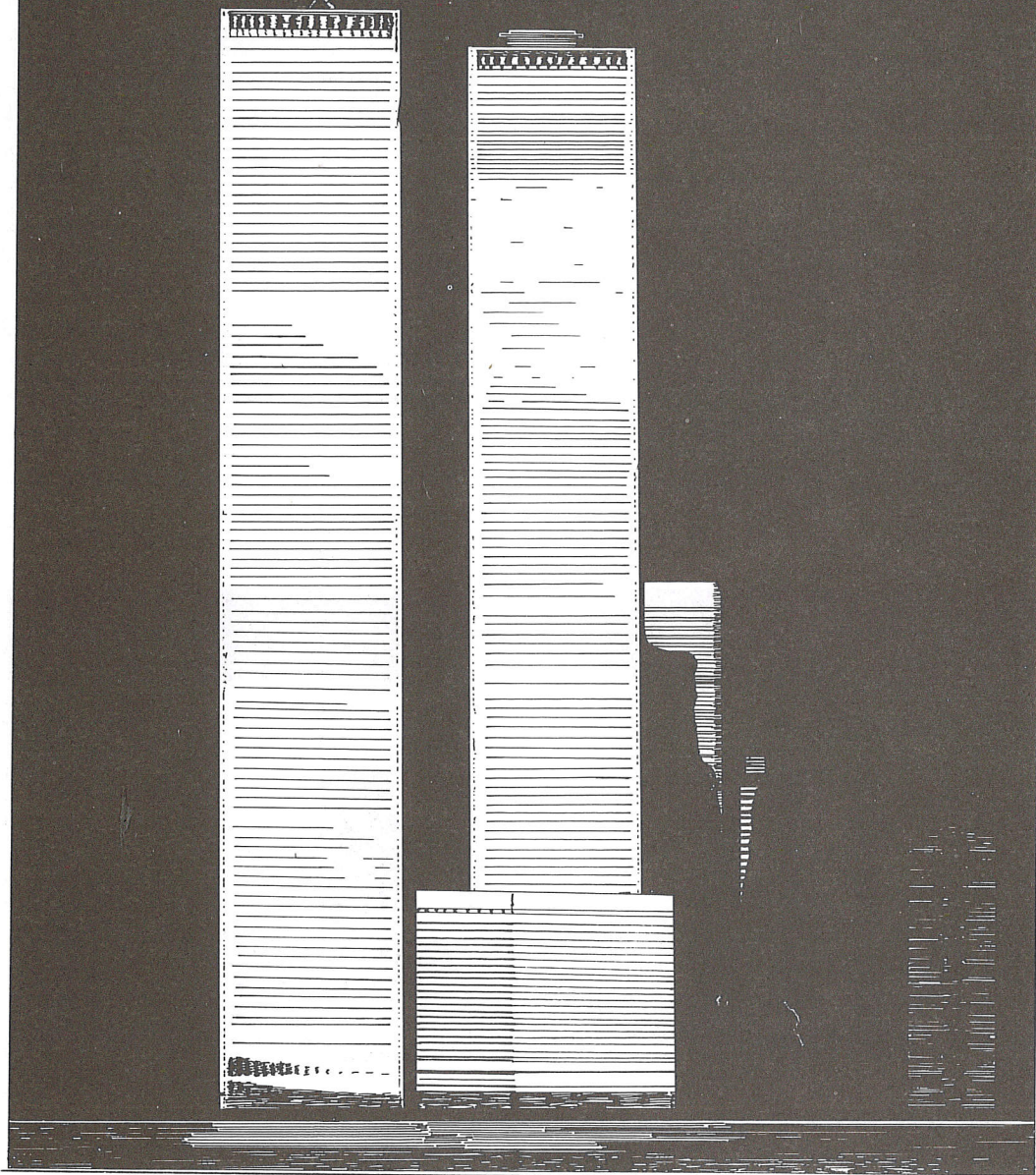
are punishing a pompous knight, Falstaff, while Mr. Ford and Mr. Page are trying to see if their wives are having an affair. At the same time, their children are eloping with anyone but the ideal mate that the parents have already chosen. Shakespeare tells us by using this absurd little continuous cycle of action that we as humans can be completely irrational if we let one wild tangent create another until absurdity is reached. Letting things go wild has always existed where humans are concerned and always will. However, one can learn from one's and others' absurd acts.

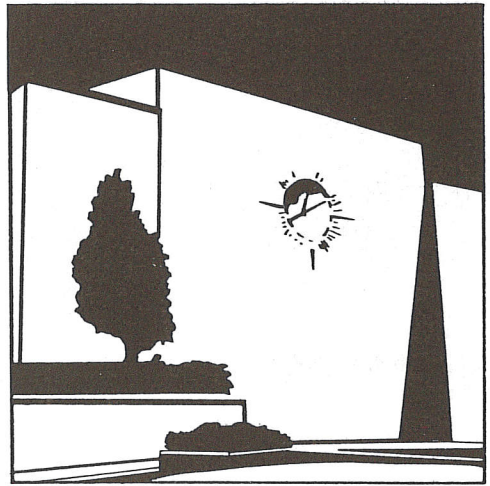
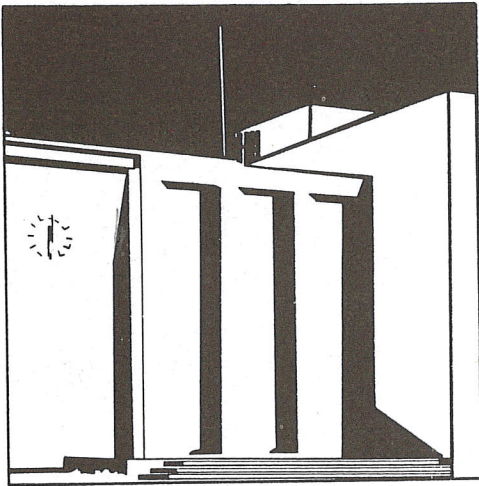
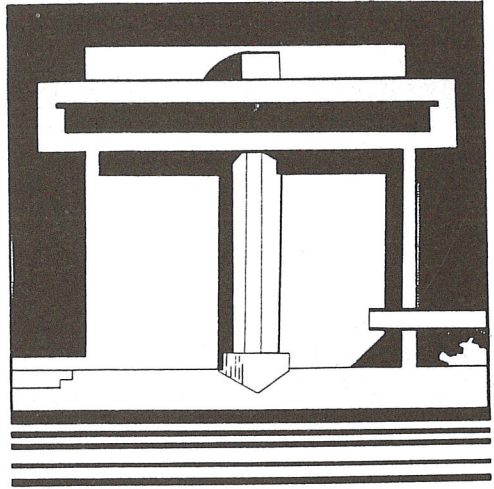
**The Merry Wives of Windsor** sets up a fictional world where time is irrelevant. All of the characters, their actions, and their emotions can occur today as well as yesterday and tomorrow. Marriage, men, women, dependence on others, and the sometimes absurdity of one's actions are illuminated through the skillful pen of Shakespeare. People and their basic components don't change; circumstances do. What one can look back on in history and laugh about may not be so humorous when the same theme exists in modern society.



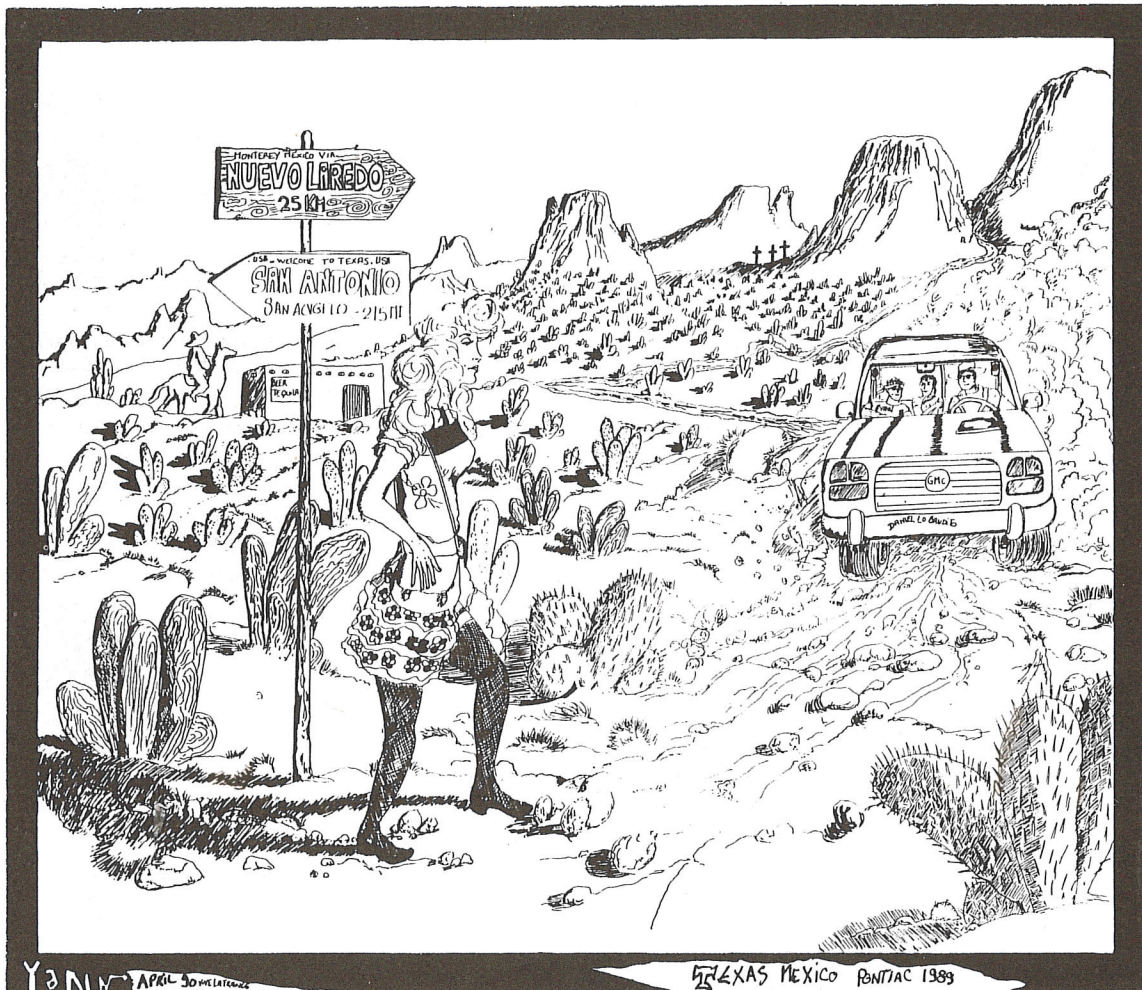
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# NEW YORK









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# SIDNEY LANIER

by Madonna Franklin

Sidney Lanier beautifully exemplifies both his realistic and romantic outlook on life through his poetry in a way which clearly distinguishes him from his contemporaries. He bridges the gap between realism and romanticism in a meticulous and discreet way. Like all men and women, he is forced to deal with the harsh realities of life and the shortcomings of society. He acknowledges the faults of society, but does not judge them. He offers no solutions, but only proposes the questions and leaves it up to the reader to dispose of it as he or she sees fit. When reality becomes intolerable, he escapes to the very extreme. His haven is nature, and it is there that he sheds all of his realistic thoughts and becomes a part of nature. His romantic side takes over and he looks at life not as it really is, but as he would like to see it. Nature has no limitations or boundaries, nor does Sidney Lanier when experiencing it. His versatility as a poet and writer is best represented in two of his most famous works of art, "The Symphony" and "The Marshes of Glynn." His transition from realism into romanticism is made apparent throughout the lines of those two poems.

In Lanier's poem "The Symphony," he takes a realistic look at the hardships of the working proletariat. Although he was dealing with a dismal subject, he romanticizes it by setting the story to the sound of a symphony. He speaks of the working class as if they were prisoners: prisoners of the very society in which they live. They get no merits, medals, or money, and yet they are the backbone of society. The poor cry out and try to achieve, but are constantly being pulled down by the aristocratic land owners and factory owners. This idea is represented in lines 29 through 40 when the poor speaks out against their rigorous lives:

'Each day, all day' (these poor folk say),  
'In the same old year-long, drear-long, way,  
We weave in the mills and heave in the kilns,  
We sieve mine-meshes under the hills,  
And thief much gold from the Devil's bank tills,  
To relieve, O God, what manner of ills?-  
The beasts, they hunger, and eat, and die;  
And so do we, and the world's a sty;  
Hush, fellow-swine: why nuzzle and cry?  
Swinehood hath no remedy  
Say many men, and hasten by,  
Clamping the nose and blinking the eye.  
But who said once, in the lordly tone,  
Man shall not live by bread alone  
But all that cometh from the Throne?  
Hath Go said so?  
But Trade saith No: (Foerster 997)

Although Lanier takes a realistic look at the lives of the poor throughout the first half of the poem, he



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breaks away from the dreary city life starting with line 116 and unfolds a beautiful description of nature and all its beauty:

Full powers from Nature manifold.  
I speak for each no-tongued tree  
That, spring by spring, doth nobler be,  
And dumbly and most wistfully  
His mighty prayerful arms outspreads  
Above men's oft-unheeding heads,  
And his big blessing downward sheds.  
I speak for all-shaped blooms and leaves,  
Lichens on stones and moss on eaves,  
Grasses and grains in ranks and sheaves;  
(Foerster 997-998)

He speaks of the forest, the birds, and the bees. He brings every aspect of the forest alive. Much of "The Symphony," is presented in a realistic fashion that depicts the happenings of the time. Although he shows a hint of romanticism in various stages of the poem, it cannot be compared to the romanticism found in his other poem "The Marshes of Glynn."

Unlike Lanier's other poem "The Symphony," "The Marshes of Glynn" has no deep, underlining theme. It is simply a poem that expresses a man's praise of nature and life. He describes the marshes of Glynn as a place where peace and tranquility exist. It is there that the body and soul unite as one. A sense of spiritual nurturing passes through the soul giving him a feeling of freedom, a freedom that he cannot find in everyday life. The theme of this poem is best summarized in the following lines:

Beautiful glooms, soft dusks in the noonday fire,-  
Wildwood privacies, closets on lone desire,  
Chamber from chamber parted with wavering arras of leaves,-  
Cells for the passionate pleasure of prayer to the soul that grieves,  
Pure with a sense of the passing of saints through the wood,  
Cool for the dutiful weighing of ill with good;-  
(Foerster 1000)

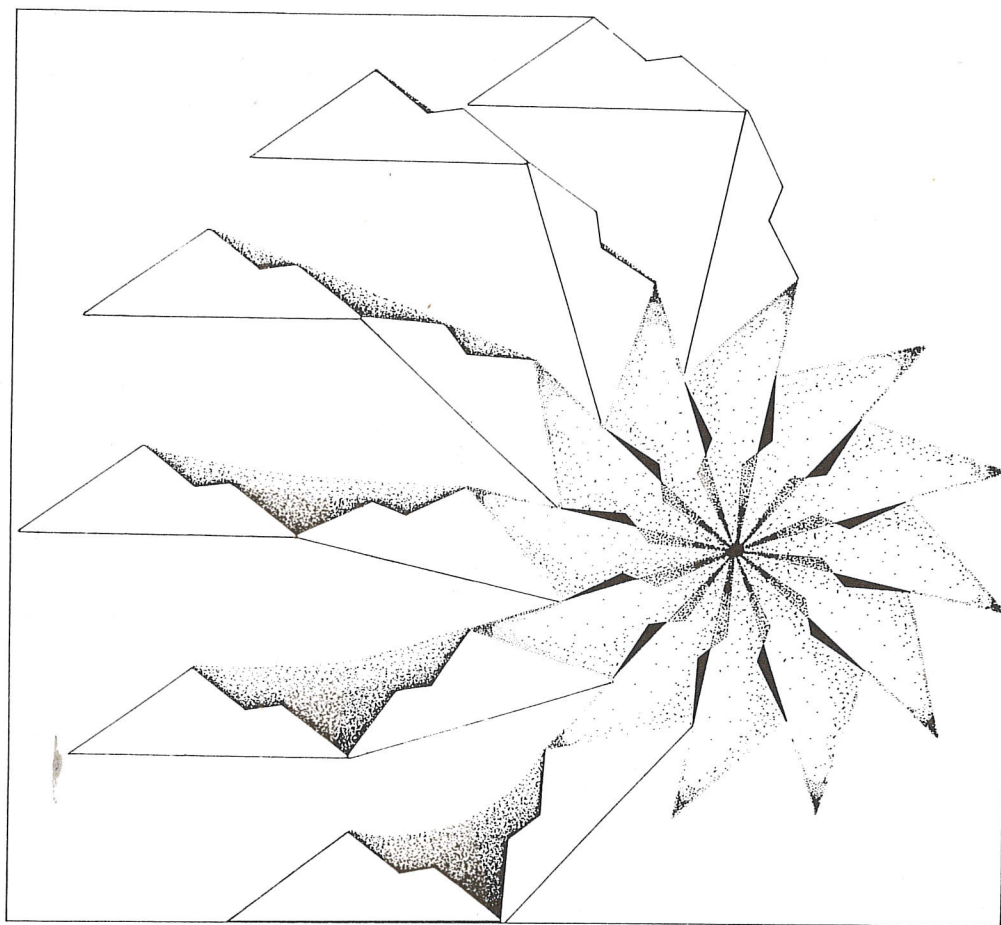
Lanier describes the marshes of Glenn so vividly that the reader almost feels that he or she is there. The reader can smell the green moss and can feel the moisture of the water on his body as he is slowly hypnotized by the lines:

How still the plains of the waters be!  
The tide is in his ecstasy.  
The tide is at his highest height:  
And it is night.  
And now from the Vast of the Lord will the waters of sleep  
Roll in on the souls of men,  
But who will reveal to our waking ken  
The forms that swim and the shapes that creep  
Under the waters of sleep? (Foerster 1002)

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Sidney Lanier's incredible respect for life and nature enables him to closely examine life and accept both the realistic and romantic aspects of it. This idea is present throughout his works and especially in "The Symphony," and "The Marshes of Glynn." He acknowledges reality, but does not always want to accept it. If he decides to accept it, he presents it in a way that makes it almost bearable to himself and the reader. Sidney Lanier is an excellent example of a writer who captured both the pleasant and not so pleasant shades of life.





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# Narrative Distance in Hemingway's Use Of "A Clean, Well-Lighted Place"

by K.C. Lazzari

Hemingway assigns the narrative privilege in this short story to an unseen, dispassionate observer, thereby presenting us with a narrator who is a stranger not only to us, but to the characters as well. Like a Dickensian spirit, he brings us to the doorway of "A Clean, Well-Lighted Place," where we are left, alone and unnoticed in the darkness outside. From this vantage point, we can overhear the conversation of the waiters within, but we cannot see their faces. The one late patron sits on the far side of the terrace, his face hidden in shadow. We can see only that he is an old man.

The distance thus placed between us is a chasm too great to be bridged. Denied any measure of physical proximity, these are characters we do not, and cannot, feel close to.

It is through the waiters' conversation that we begin to approach these characters, if at all. Both speak with the short, simple sentence structure common among men with little formal education. Their employment as closing shift waiters in a small cafe also lends itself to this inference. Though the content of their conversation enables us to establish the identities of each waiter as

separate from the other, it offers nothing to help us to distinguish either of them from any of a thousand other such men. Rather, each is seen, not as a distant individual, but as a personification of a stage of life that all men pass through.

The younger waiter, declaring himself "full of confidence," displays all youth's impatience and preoccupation with his own concerns. He is unable to translate his limited experience of life into a true understanding of either the older waiter with whom he works, or of the old man whose brandy he serves. Always eager to move on to the next day, he cannot be content to pass the time quietly at the end of each one. In his view, such hour spent in idle conversation are wasted hours which could have been put to better use. Full of his confidence and enthusiasm for life, Youth cannot envision himself growing old, and so finds it incomprehensible.

The older waiter, having already left behind his own youth, defines his place in life, he cannot now relate it to himself. He has come to terms with his own mortality, and no longer feels the urgency to hurry through his days. He is able to experience a certain



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kinship with the old man, seeing in him a future version of himself. He is content to linger at the end of the day prolonging the evening's quiet hours in the company of others, knowing that each coming day will be essentially no different from any already past, except, perhaps, emptier. "It was a nothing that he knew too well... Nada y pues nada y nada y pues nada." Growing old, life becomes ever more hollow, until there is nothing more to look forward to. Reaching the end, we are all the same; each man faces death alone.

Prevented from entering into "A Clean, Well-Lighted Cafe," we are held back away from the characters we would seek to know. They remain veiled, nameless, faceless men. Such characters transcend the scope of this seemingly simple story into a truly universal dimension.

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# A Bonding of Movements

by Mark Hoewisch

Throughout literary history there have been a number of highly talented and widely acclaimed poets. Their poetry has mirrored the lives they have led, and the thoughts and ideas they have expressed about the time in which they lived. Many of these poets have been acknowledged for the talent they have shown in their writing, but there are some poets who have also been recognized for their ability to combine literary techniques and literary movements. Walt Whitman is such an example. His talent for writing is extraordinary, yet his talent for combining realism with romanticism has been recognized as that of a true genius.

However, there have also been many criticisms about Whitman and his writings. Most of them stem from the fact that he was a homosexual and was not afraid to admit to it. This is not only shown in what has been written about him, but what he, himself, has also written: "On his right cheek I put the family kiss,/ And in my soul I swear I never will deny him" (Foerster 748). Nevertheless, Whitman's ability to acknowledge this aspect of himself, and accept it, has enabled him to express what so many other people fear - truth, and with the expression of truth comes the truest form of writing. It is for this reason that Whitman's poetry cannot go unnoticed, and it is also the same reason that he has had the ability to bridge the chasm which has sometimes separated realism from romanticism.

One of Whitman's most popular poems, "Song of Myself," unites realism and romanticism into a bond of perfect harmony. Side by side, the two r's travel together throughout the entire poem until the very end where neither one of them finish first nor last. "Song of Myself" is a poem about life: birth and death, war and peace, laughter and happiness, tears and sadness. The poem gives its readers a romantic and beautiful view of life, yet it does not hide the grim and realistic facets of life which so many people would rather ignore. This poem is not about truth; the poem is truth, and to say otherwise would only destroy the true meaning of the poem.

"Song of Myself" is a poem in which life is not only portrayed realistically, but also romantically:

Space and Time! now I see it is true, what I  
guess'd at,/ What I guess'd when I loaf'd  
on the grass,/ What I guess'd while I lay  
alone in my bed, And again as I walk'd the  
beach under the paling start of the  
morning.

My ties and ballasts leave me, my elbows  
rest in sea - gaps,/ I skirt sierras, my palms  
cover continents,/ I am afoot with my  
vision. (741)

In this passage from the poem, the narrator has left the limited confines of physical reality and simply let himself go. There are





no barriers he must cross, and no rules he must follow. The world is his to enjoy with pure happiness and serenity. This passage and the following passage also portray Whitman's belief that time and space are joined together to create a concept in which there is total freedom. "I know I have the best of time and space, and was never measured and never will be measured" (753). Space and time cannot be defined, and they certainly cannot be measured by physical regulations. They must simply be felt and experienced together as one entity.

Being the romantic Whitman was, "Song of Myself" also shows how he felt about nature as a spiritual force:

You sea! I resign myself to you also--I guess what you mean,/ I behold from the beach your crooked inviting fingers,/ I believe you refuse to go back without feeling of me,/ We must have a turn together, I undress, hurry me out of sight of the land,/ Cushion me soft rock me in billowy drowse, Dash me with amorous wet, I can repay you. (735)

This passage also brings to light his belief in the mystics. He continues to write, "Howler and scooper of storms, capricious and dainty sea,/ I am integral with you, I too am of one phase and of all phases" (435). The speaker not only notices the sea and goes into it, but he also becomes a part of it, joining himself with a greater spirit.

A final point in Whitman's romantic writing is the expression of love of the individual. This is shown, first of all, in the title, "Song of Myself." It is then also shown in the first few opening lines:

I celebrate myself, and sing myself  
And what I assume you shall assume,  
For every atom belonging to me as good  
belongs to you. (724)

However, the love of the individual does not end here. Throughout the rest of the poem, a reader will grasp this concept right up to the very end.

Whitman's "Song of Myself" does not only show his romantic side. The poem also illustrates a very realistic part of him, a part of life which must be acknowledged.

"Song of Myself" portrays life as vividly as though the reader was seeing it with his own eyes:

Where the rattlesnake suns his flabby length on a rock, where the otter is feeding on fish,/ Where the alligator in his tough pimples sleeps by the bayou. (741)

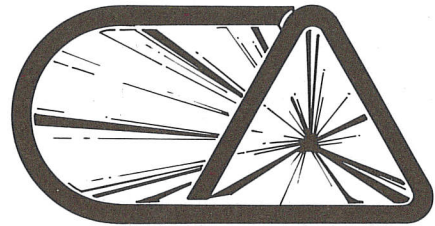
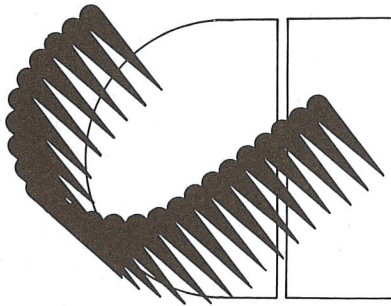
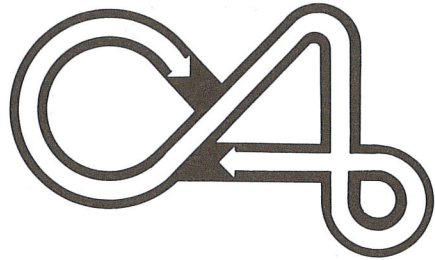
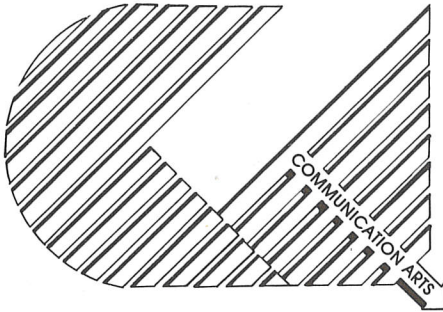
However, life is not serene and content all the time. There is also war, death and destruction:

Now I tell what I knew in Texas in my early youth,... 'Tis the tale of the murder in cold blood of four hundred and twelve young men... At eleven o'clock began the burning of the bodies; (745)

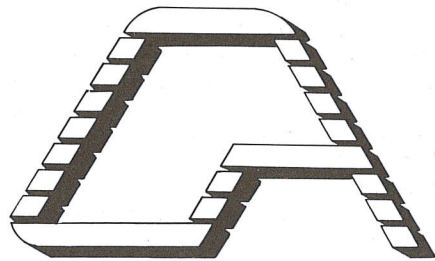
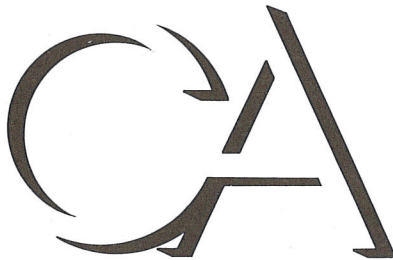
Even though there are many things which would rather be ignored, they must be seen and dealt with, not in a romantic fashion, but in a realistic and matter-of-fact way.

In essence, Whitman has not only created a bridge between realism and romanticism, but he has actually brought the two together in a bond of oneness. His poetry is not to be sneered at or degraded, for it is poetry which speaks of the one thing which so many people are afraid to admit - the truth.





COMMUNICATION ARTS



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# English and Science Fiction: *Contributions of the Genre to the Language*

by Jo Ann Clute

*It has often been noted that English is a language of change. New words seem to spring up from every conceivable source on a regular basis, while the meaning of old words have a disconcerting tendency to mutate when we least expect it! These changes may originate almost anywhere. The scientific community makes regular contributions, as do the government, the music industry, and the financial sector; and of course, it is well known that each succeeding generation of teenagers believe it their sacred duty to twist, warp, stretch, and mangle the language in previously unheard of ways.*

*Some of the more intriguing additions in recent times have their roots in an equally intriguing source: science fiction. Though frequently dismissed by the general public as a frivolous waste of time at best, a potentially dangerous escapist snare at worst, this genre, too, has made its mark on the English language.*

*Twenty-five years ago, anyone who went around saying "Live long and prosper!" would most likely have been taken for some sort of romantic idiot, or perhaps a hippie. Today, most people would have little difficulty in identifying the phrase as a derivative of the television series **Star Trek**. Similarly, prior to the release of the **Star Wars** trilogy, it would have earned an individual some rather strange looks to be heard saying, "May the Force be with you!"; whereas today, there is little danger of being mistaken for a follower of some obscure religious cult if one uses this expression.*

*Of course, the influence of science fiction over English is by no means limited to wishes for good health and supernatural protection. Many terms common in our everyday exchanges can be attributed to the genre. Some have been around for years and have simply been given new meanings: "warp," for example, may refer as easily to an irregularity in the space-time continuum or to an advanced propulsion system as to a wood floor which has suffered the effects of damp weather.*

*Some, on the other hand, are pure invention. Isaac Asimov coined the term "robotics" to describe a nonexistent science; exactly where the word "android" originated is open to conjecture, but there can be little doubt that it was first used by an imaginative author who tired of referring to his mechanical men as "automations."*

*A true devotee of science fiction has an enormous repertoire of well-recognized quotations from which to choose. Indeed, he or she can probably come up with something to cover just about any situation. Faced with hopeless ineptitude or stupidity, he might groan, "Beam me up, Scotty. There's no intelligent life down here!" The appearance of an antagonistic mother-in-law might send him running for cover with cries of "Warning! Warning! Danger! Danger!" And woe betide his unsuspecting friends should they pick up a telephone ("Who ya gonna call?") or fall asleep ("He's dead, Jim!")*

*Aside from common terms and phrases, there are a number of names taken from science fiction which have gained almost universal recognition. E.T., R2D2, Mr. Spock, and Will Robinson are familiar to all, as are the starship Enterprise, the Millennium Falcon, and the Batmobile. Even the U.S. government has gone so*



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far as to name one of its space shuttles after Captain Kirk's famous ship, while President Reagan's SDI program was gleefully dubbed "Star Wars" by the media, much to his (and George Lucas') displeasure. The Jedi Master Yoda has been given the dubious honor of his very own Weird Al song; and the Navy's first nuclear-powered submarine bore the name of Captain Nemo's nuclear-powered fanciful **Nautilus**.

Occasionally one might run into a term which, having long been used in a more mundane sense, has also acquired a science fiction meaning and thus becomes confusing. For example, should a man walk up and ask, "Have you heard about the aliens?", many of us would be hard pressed to come up with an answer, for it would be unclear whether he was referring to illegal immigrants or to extraterrestrials (or both). And again, should the word "dimensions" unexpectedly come up in a conversation, it would be rather awkward for the fellow who wasn't listening. Was that alternate planes of reality or window frames they were talking about?

One unique feature of science fiction terminology is that it sometimes originates as an utterly fanciful concept, then becomes a reality through scientific advances. **Robots** were once mere figments of somebody's imagination; now they not only exist, but are becoming more and more sophisticated and widely used. Biologists have succeeded in creating **clones** of living creatures and have discovered subatomic particles which they call **anti-matter**. **Cyborgs** walk among us; although that particular term is seldom applied, any human being with artificial additions, from an eye lens to a pacemaker or a prosthetic limb, qualifies. The **black hole** is now widely accepted as an actual phenomenon.

It would be interesting, I think, to visit the past and to discover just how many of the words we use without a moment's thought today might once have belonged to the realm of science fiction. Submarine, television, dishwasher and electric light must once have been regarded in much the same way as time machine and starship are today. Imagine walking up to a seventeenth-century colonist and saying, "I drove my car down to the movie theatre and saw **The Texas Chainsaw Massacre**, then went home and watched TV." Assuming the colonist did not have you arrested as a drunk or lunatic, you would have to explain at least four concepts which, to him, would seem utterly ridiculous. A carriage without a horse? Moving pictures projected on a screen? A device which could tear through the trunk of a tree in minutes? Absurd!

Even more interesting would be a visit to the future to discover which of our own science fiction words has become a reality. Assuming we're still around, what might we find in, say, the year 2189? Might **transporter** have taken the place of **car** in everyday conversation? Could the word **android** be spoken with the same ease as **child**, **employee** or **friend**.

Because English has borrowed so heavily from so many sources, and because it lends itself so easily to the creation of new words, it seems an ideal language in which to express new thoughts and concepts. Thus the English language and the science fiction genre have developed a relationship which is both intriguing and mutually beneficial. As our imaginations expand and our knowledge grows, I believe this relationship will continue to flourish for a long time to come.

Live long and prosper.

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# The Thank-You

by Cathee Roehrig

*I pick up the gray photo album, so large and bulky and worn out about the edges, to glance over the cherished photographs of one of the five years we've been together now, smiling faces beaming back at me from past events that we've shared, photos permanently placed in their correct chronological order. The pictures are extremely important to me, but it is the movie ticket stubs, pressed flowers, saved cartoons, articles and other various mementos stashed between the pages that are the things that help my mind reconstruct the unique and unforgettable moments between us. (You always did laugh at all the "crap", as you called it, I could stuff into one of these albums. But you never laughed out loud at my crazed sentimentality...well, hardly ever.)*

*As I scan through the sometime-stuck-together pages, my eyes settle upon the photos and things from our San Francisco trip in March of '88. I have all of these photographs marked with dates and places, but you will rattle off the trivial things I always choose to ignore-temperatures, times, scenes - but there is one brief segment from that trip that I will always remember, minute details or not, very vividly within my memory. I remember. You remember. Maybe all to well.....*

*.....We had enjoyed a glorious week-long trip driving a rented car up the California coastline, laughing, singing and speaking of our worldly observations. You always let me drive, indulging me in my passion for driving, while listening to my strange artistic revelations and sickening puns. You always brought up the neatest facts and had the best stories by far. It was fun. It was wonderful. It was freedom at its best!*

*And with this freedom, we were content to laze around various beaches, exploring small towns*

*and parks, soaking up the richness of Carmel for a few days. God, the shopping and the purchasing of incredible things we encountered along the way! It was so fine a trip! And even though we were enjoying ourselves, time seemed extremely kind to us by allowing the days to drift by at a slow, leisurely pace.*

*But eventually we neared the end of our travels and reached my aunt's house in Alameda. We were to stay with my aunt for a few fays of relaxation and intelligent conversation. So, having introduced you to her, we settled into her inviting home and unpacked our things.*

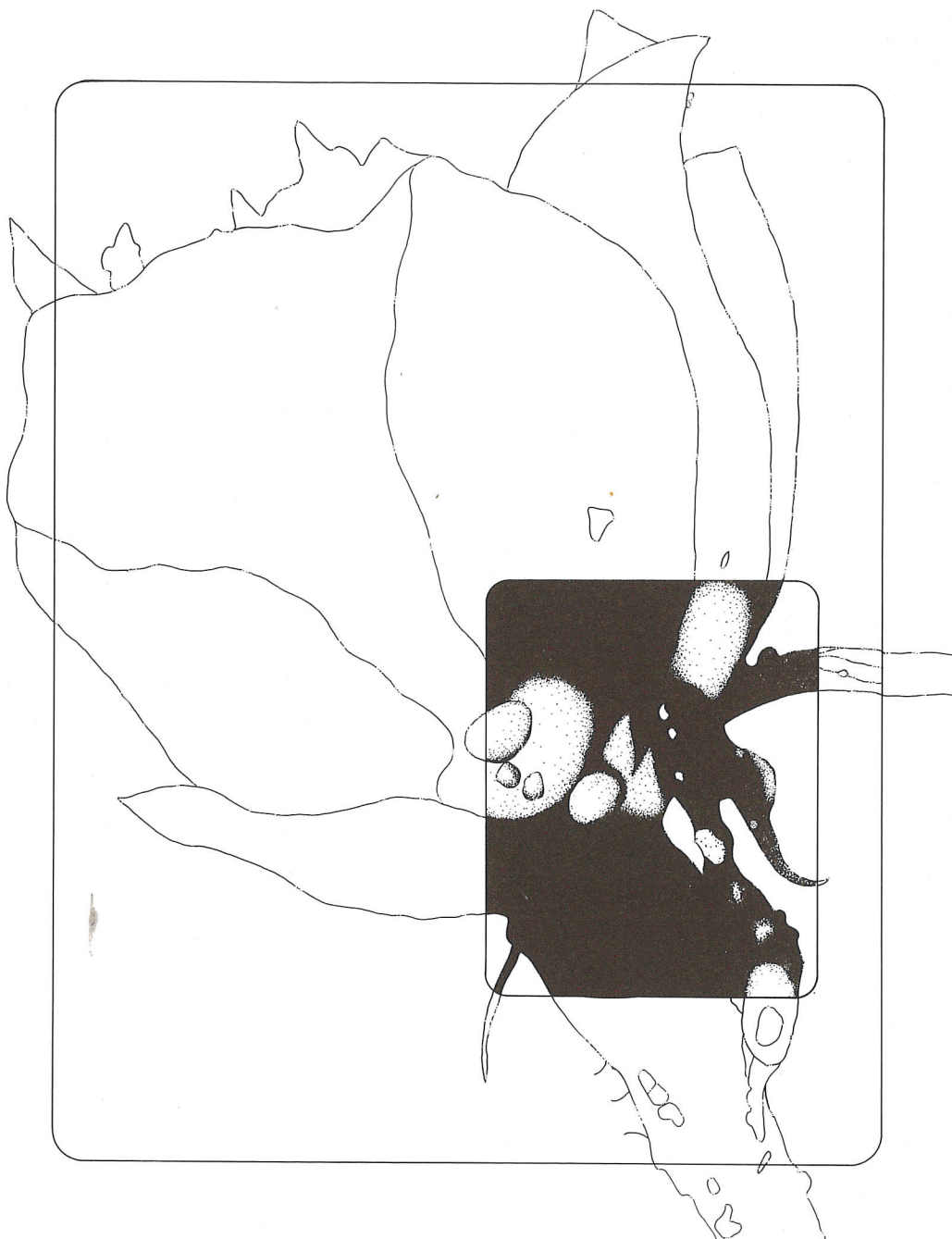
*We were left to our privacy much of the time, so in those moments we would venture out into her neighborhood for long walks. Many of our best, romantic walks were at night when we could hold hands and speak of crazy things. No one about, just the two of us having a great time at something as simple as walking. It was romantic. It was enchanting. It was just as dopey, but hey, it was our vacation to do as we pleased.*

*But one of those romantic nights changed, and that is the harsh reality of the world, for change is ever constant in our lives. (However, the nice thing about all of this is that I am able to reflect upon this event.) For it was on that night that you saved my life, a moment I have no photo or relic to tuck away to remember it by. I have no need of those things for my memory to be activated, because I have my life, and that is memorable in itself.*

*You remember. You dressed in your blue jeans, tennis shoes, a favored shirt and that grand ancient leather jacket I love so well. I dressed in those insanely tight jeans, high-heeled boots, a white shirt and my short black leather jacket, certainly not the appropriate attire for the events of that evening, but hey, we did look great together, didn't we? Both tall and thin, each complementing the other - you were dark and bearded, I was blond and tanned. Just another young couple out on another California night. Nothing different, just another walk in the dark.*

*Of course, you took your knife along. "Never leave home without it" you always said. A habit from your Vietnam days, a habit that you would never kick. Your knife. It was always something I didn't believe in (at the time), being the "non-violent" and "all that crap" sort of person that I*





was. (Oh how I would change my outlook, eh? Funny how those things happen, and interesting that they leave such a lasting mark.)

So, knife in hand (or in your case - pocket), we walked to the convenience store situated along our walking route. An "Alpha-Beta" store to be exact. We went into the store with the intent of purchasing a better lock for my suitcase for the trip back home. ( A lock. Such a minor detail, something that one would not believe would change a person's life! But how it did!) Once in the store, we split up, each setting out to locate a decent luggage lock before the other. But of course, along the way I idled near the displays that were of interest to women, and you wandered about the things that interest men.

Peering at the merchandise, but always observant, I became aware of a young blond man who had, coincidentally, been in all of the previous aisles I had ventured. Uneasy, I made my way back to you, feeling that that would somehow ease my anxiety. Feeling somewhat silly, I mentioned the man to you - in fact he was standing in the same aisle as we spoke - and you told me that you had already noticed the man and his behavior. We both noticed that it was extremely suspicious that the man was wearing dark sunglasses - being that it was a poorly lit store and it was well after 10 p.m., so even for California this seemed very odd to us.

You told me not to worry - even as the man eyed us from the next checkout lane - and you were calm and reassuring to me as we walked out of the store, past the cars in the parking lot. I vaguely remember the man's car in the lot, but you had noticed that he had others with him in that car. You then told me that I would listen to everything that you would tell me to do that night, and that I WOULD do everything you said without question. I wanted to argue about that, but you were extremely tense at that point and very definite in your word choice.

I've come to trust your instincts - God knows they've been correct before - so I trusted you that night, and you didn't let me down, I am living proof of that.

I remember your hand always on the knife in your pocket, our "always looking back" (I relive that part over and over again ...look back, keep checking, look back.) And then the knife dropped out of the well worn pocket of your jeans. We retrieved it from those rusted railroad tracks - God,

remember that?

I'll never forget the walk down that street that night. Just you and I - and four lanes of nothing with a center turn lane - how could it have been so damn deserted? I remember our stride; it's always been a fast pace anyway, but that night it went to extremes! And as we walked I can still visualize the "thickness" of the darkness about us, the shadows from the trees on the sidewalk and the blue hazy glow from the street lights. Funny how those things stick in your brain.

And then that muffler noise from an approaching car. Just the sound of it made you tense up and definite that it was going to be trouble. It came up from behind us, but being the intelligent person that you are, you had us walk toward oncoming traffic lanes so that the man from the convenience store would have had to make a u-turn across all five lanes to reach us. Smart move. It gave us some time, some control on the situation. God, there was that car. No other traffic, on other noises. Just that big old car and the muffler noises pounding in our ears.

As the car completed the expected u-turn and rolled up beside us, you told me to walk on ahead and keep on going, not to look back, just to keep on walking. I remember telling you no, that I wanted to stay with you, and you cut me short, actually yelling at me to listen to what you were telling me to do. At that moment I realized the intense danger upon us and I walked. I did not run, I did not panic, I did as you told me, but I did look back.

And I saw the two men (you told me later that a third man was lying down in the back seat). The large car door opened and one of them got out and approached you. It was not the man from the store; he must have been the one driving the car. It was difficult to see, I did notice he had dark features and he was about your size, but he was definitely not the blonde from the store.

All I thought about was how this was happening to us ....and cliches. You know the ones: "Your life passing before your eyes," "time standing still," and "everything happening in slow motion." All of those things people tell you that they remember when in a life-threatening situation. (I didn't have any of those things actually happen to me. I just stood there thinking of the cliches!) Go ahead and laugh. You can now. But back then it did not appear as a humorous moment in our lives. In fact, all you did was stand



there.

Yes, I watched. You stood there. I thought you were really nuts at that point. All the crazed Vietnam vet stories came to mind. You just stood there, egging that son of a bitch on. Like you wanted him to come at you. He did come at you! And you just stood there saying "C'mon, that's it. C'mon." It was then that I saw the switchblade glide down from your jacket sleeve and shine in your hand. He saw it too. The scum had good eyes. He hesitated.

I was walking backwards to keep watch over you. A lot of good I was going to be. I had figured out a crude plan of running out into the street in front of the next approaching car - but no car ever came! God, how helpless one can feel! All I could do was watch. Do as I was told, pray that something would happen to get us out of that mess!

And then the low-life backed down. I couldn't believe it! Your bluff worked. He looked my way, and then he looked back at you maybe he was figuring out a different approach to the problem, nah, he just got back into the car, speeding off into the direction from which they came; the rattling muffler noises quickly dissipating as fast as we had noticed them coming. You and I, alone again. Walking back to each other, locking arms in a tight embrace.

The walk home was intensified! My mind reeling with the adrenalin kicking into my body-----What if they had had a gun? What if you hadn't noticed the knife dropping out of your jeans? What if they hadn't backed down? What if you hadn't been with me that night? What if they had gotten to me? God, what if.....

You smiled! You actually laughed! At that time I figured it was the adrenalin acting for you (later, I wondered if you hadn't actually enjoyed the danger and excitement involved!), and I continued to ramble on with my "what if" list. You then told me that I could "what if" all night if I wanted to, but that things had worked out for the best, and we were both definitely okay.

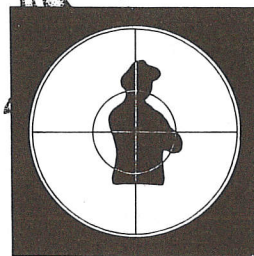
At that thought, we slipped into the house where my aunt had already retired for the night. I was super-alert, super hyped-up! I would not sleep that night; thoughts whirling about in my imaginative mind, keeping me up the following night as well. You were hyped-up also, but I thought yours was a much more "controlled hyped-up" than mine. I certainly do believe in adrenalin rushes

involved with such episodes; they are definitely real.

No word of the incident was said to my aunt, and after bidding farewell, we returned - uneventfully, - thank God, - home.

.....So, now you will tell me of all the strange little things you remember about this incident, but those dates, times, temperatures, etc. mean absolutely nothing to me when I compare them to my thoughts of what the outcome of that night could've been like for us. And I thank God that someone was watching out for us up there.

I owe you everything, and then some. It all sounds so hokey and trite. But I do owe you a big payment, I just don't know how to put a price on such an act. I do know that a nice "down payment" against this debt to you would be that white Jaguar you always talk about owning someday.





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# A Case Study Of Generations In Conflict or The Pin-Striped Suit Dilemma

by Shelby J. Clark

Differences between father's and son's taste in clothes sometimes represents a deeper, natural antagonism between the generations.

Back in the late sixties and early seventies many fashions reflected and supported a political statement. Take for example, the flower-power generation with its peace icons, and flowered hair. As the decades progressed into the eighties, the statement had changed from political to economical, as evidenced in the designer shirts and raggedy jeans costing hundreds of dollars. In both examples though, the undercurrent was not just a simple protest or status statement. It more closely resembled the younger generation's need for its own signature, its own identity. This need for identity has led to many interesting conflicts, some humorous such as the conflict that developed between my dad and my brother.

My brother was packing and labeling boxes for the drive to Iowa where he was going to complete his postgraduate studies. The next morning Sheldon would be rolling down the highway toward Davenport and freedom. Did I say freedom? Well, freedom of a sort. My brother had earned his Bachelor's degree and took a year and a half off school to earn some money, thus enabling him to continue his studies. For that year and a half he moved back home with Mom and Dad. That's when

freedom, as he had known it, died. All of a sudden there was someone behind him dictating proper collegiate attire. Somehow his choice of eye glass frame wasn't quite suitable. Sheldon's hair was a little too long. His moustache wasn't quite appropriate. "Really Sheldon, that jacket looks like hell," my father said. So the days passed, back and forth bickering between two presumed heads of state.

Late in the evening Dad entered Sheldon's room carrying a dark-blue pin-striped suit. "Here take this suit with you. That way you'll have something else to wear besides that God awful, ugly Air Force reject you must be sleeping in."

"Dad, I don't want or need the suit. Besides it's yours. It won't look good on me," Sheldon replied.

"Of course you'll need a suit," Dad affirmed.

"For what?" Sheldon, like my dad, has a very short fuse on his temper, and now Dad had struck a match. The explosion was just a matter of time. "What will you need the suit for? Why you never know, maybe for a change you will want to look like a professional, so that someday when you finally get out of college, you will know how to dress like a real-live adult! Don't you ever go out for dinner? Don't you ever want to look just plain nice?"

"Dad, the only places I ever go are either to McDonald's or Jose's Burrito Emporium. At one I will be

overdressed, and at the other, in big trouble. I don't need that damn suit!"

My mother, who had been in the kitchen and had heard the opening ring of round two, came rushing in and worked the great compromise of 1979. With the wisdom of Solomon, the great arbitrator convinced my dad that Sheldon shouldn't have to wear something he didn't want, and convinced Sheldon that if he took it, it would end the conflict before weapons were sought. Besides, she confided, he could forget the suit in the back of his closet, safe from the light of day and his friends.

The compromise was struck, and Sheldon, smiling at the mother-son collusion placed the suit on the hook in back of the front seat of his car. My father was also smiling, because he knew in his heart that as soon as Sheldon was in Iowa, he would come to his senses, accept his father's judgment in taste and wear the suit.

Three-and-a-half years, and three apartment moves later, the suit incident was all but forgotten. I decided to fly to Iowa to see my brother. While I was there, I would help him get ready for his graduation-migration back home. We were packing boxes and cleaning out his closet when I came across this long forgotten pin-striped double-breasted suit along with a collage mixture of a wardrobe that time forgot. It included brightly colored satin shirts, a Nehru jacket, sashed vests, and a heavy navy-blue wool Air Force marching coat which my brother absolutely loved. Sheldon said, after a glance, to trash it all with the exception of the old blue horse blanket which he called a coat. "Sheldon," I said, as I held the suit at arm's length. "This suit doesn't look too bad. It's dusty from hanging, but get it cleaned and it won't look so bad. Let's keep it." My brother's eyes gleamed and fired, "Nol I've had that suit since '72. I hated it then, and I hate it even more now. Don't you remember? Dad made me wear it for my high school graduation. Now it goes where it belongs-to the Salvation Army with the rest of this junk. After all, now I'm a professional."

That should have been the end of the story of the suit, but about six months after Sheldon moved back home Dad came into his room to reclaim the estranged suit.

"Sheldon, look in your closet and find the suit I loaned you."

"What suit?"

"Oh come on, my blue pin-striped, double-breasted suit. The one I loaned you to take to Iowa."

"Dad, you didn't loan me any suit. I don't remember any suit except that ugly pin-striped one you made me wear for high school. Why would I take your suit anyway? That's nuts!"

This exchange continued sporadically, but with increasing intensity for some time. Shortly after, I innocently pulled into my folk's driveway unaware of the skirmish taking place. As I entered through the utility room door, the rumblings could be heard through the house. Soon the earth would tremble and I wondered half aloud, "Great Scott, what's the argument about this time?"

"Hey, what goes on here? Can't you two get along together for five minutes?" I inquired, although I already knew the answer. My mother who had been listening, but hadn't yet interceded, calmly explained to me that Dad was sure he had given Sheldon his brand new \$350.00 suit to use while in Iowa, and Sheldon denied ever seeing it. My mother, of course, conveniently added, "I don't seem to remember."

Suddenly my mind flashed back to the Great Iowa Give-Away. My father and my brother had moved into the utility room to plead their respective cases to another helpless, unsuspecting magistrate. As I looked in their general direction, the memory returned and my mouth fell open. I must have turned ghostly white as I sucked air into my lungs. As all heads turned in my direction, the one word question that I hoped no one would ask was uttered in unison, "What?"

All at once the memories flooded back to me. The heaps of cast-off-clothing, the smiling attendant at the Salvation Army, and that gleam in my brother's eye when I first displayed the dusty suit on the hanger. I tried to explain that it wasn't given away intentionally, that it was all just a silly comedy of errors, and that my brother really didn't do it on purpose. In short, I figured if I talked long enough, I might prevent Sheldon's death although I wasn't sure about his impending adoption. But it was too late. Dad went from a rosy pink complexion to flaming red in the mere blink of an eye. His face puffed up like a blow fish. My dad's health was good, and I knew his heart could handle what was about to happen, but I was beginning to doubt that mine could. Words flowed from his lips like lava down a volcano. "My suit! Your gave away my suit! Do you know what that suit cost? Where were your brains? How could you?! You threw away my suit and kept that abomination of an Air Force jacket! My



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God Mother. call the college; maybe we can still get a refund. I never even got a chance to wear that suit! How could you have been so stupid?"

A mother bear protecting her cubs couldn't have been much different than my mother's defense of my brother. Her memory returned and she reminded dad that he had successfully forced that apparel on my brother, that there was a resemblance to his high school suit, and that he probably did in fact get the suits confused. My dad looked imploringly at my mother and in a rather small, defeated voice said, "I know, I know, but did he have to give it away?"

F. Lee Bailey would have been proud of my mother's defense. It was so masterful. I was in awe and was starting to rejoice in the fact that I wouldn't have to live the rest of my life as an only child, when my brother, realizing he had been saved, flippantly added, "You know, Dad there is probably some poor derelict right now in Davenport wearing the best damn suit he ever owned in his life and thanking the heavens above for people like you!"

Children, regardless of their age, instinctively know the parental breaking point and when they cross over. Now Sheldon was nothing if not instinctive and he moved quickly behind my back and my mother's. Looking at my father, I flashed a mental image of some grisly old man sitting at a soup-kitchen cafeteria wearing my dad's \$350.00 suit. That, plus the total absurdity of the situation caused a smile that quickly evolved into laughter. Between the gigglings, I told Dad that I was sure a thank-you note from the Salvation Army would be forthcoming, or maybe just a request for a good pair of black wingtips to go with the suit.

Sheldon and mom joined in the gaiety and we all had a wonderful laugh at my father's expense. He, of course, didn't see the humor at all. He was beaten for the time.

About four months later, this incident was seemingly forgotten and life was again going on. It was a particularly cold and blustery January and Sheldon was looking for his Air Force marching coat. When he had come home, he thought that he had unpacked it, but he wasn't sure so he asked my folks. Mom said that if it wasn't in the closet, she didn't know where it was, and Dad said very little, but his smile was tremendous as he walked out of the room.

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# In Praise Of Uniformity

by Cathee Roehrig

The problem facing America's school systems are numerous, but many of these problems could be alleviated by the utilization of one simple program: Students should be made to wear uniforms from kindergarten through twelfth grade. The British, the Japanese and many of America's private schools have adopted such uniform systems with great success, so the obvious solution is to adopt this uniform code throughout America's school systems.

The first problem that uniforms would correct is the high cost of clothing a child for the school year. With the continuing high costs of raising and educating children, the uniform is a lower-cost alternative to children's school clothes. Retailers are quick to mark up many "in" styles of fashions so that they can make a fast buck when they note a growing fad, but with uniforms, the parents need only to make one low cost investment. The only time parents would have to expend more cash for a uniform is when it is damaged or outgrown. If the uniform is outgrown, it can be worn by younger future students in the family, or it can be sold to a family in need of it. My own mother benefited from this system immensely! With six kids to put through school, uniforms were a godsend!

With the difficulty of cost out of the way, uniforms would then eliminate the obvious "life status" of a child. Uniforms allow the poor, the middle class and the rich child to blend together without the visual separation of latest fashion trends. Through the wearing of uniforms, the poor child is allowed to compete on a much more equal basis with his peers without the humiliation of "looking poor." Rich children would not be able to flaunt their stylish clothes, and middle-class children would not feel the need to compete for higher priced fashions. Uniforms allow children not to be separated visually by their peers and teachers merely because of their parents' position in life.

Solving the competition of clothes between students, uniforms would also solve the "lack of focus" in our school children. With unified outfits, children are able to focus on their intellect and personality skills instead of what their fellow classmates are wearing in ways of latest trends. Children would have to master their social skills, to develop their personalities and improve their educational abilities in order to "stand out" amongst their peers. Utilizing this uniform system, material items would no longer be the issue in school performance, knowledge and the ability to excel would be the major issues for students' concern. Uniforms give kids the chance to be judged by their capacity to succeed.

And when children excel in other ways, uniforms can then help alleviate the growing violence within our schools. When uniforms are employed, classmates are less violently



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aggressive toward one another. This has been proven in Detroit area schools that have adopted this system of dress. Once uniforms were introduced, and each child could no longer compete for "in" clothing, the acts of violence and murder over clothes dropped dramatically. Children were better, more attentive students, much friendlier to each other and eager to succeed at their studies. Uniforms made the teachers happier with the fact that students were concentrating and not competing for materialistic things. Parents were relieved that they would no longer have to worry about their child being hurt or killed over something as petty as a jacket or a pair of tennis shoes. Uniforms are a simple solution in curbing some of the violence in our schools.

Now, the people who oppose the use of uniforms in America's schools voice their concerns that such a policy would only stifle a child's individuality and freedom of expression, but as I have pointed out, a student does not need trendy clothes to be an individual! His personality, talents and educational skills will make him a far better individual than the wearing of the hottest fads ever will. Freedom of expression? Well, let the child use his mouth to express his freedom, let him express himself through hairstyles or through humor or through the arts and sports programs available to him at school. Why let clothes control the child's only means of expression to others? Why not let stronger, lifelong abilities become the child's individualistic expression? Would'nt we be teaching our children much more valuable lessons in life?

There is so much competition between children....why add to their problems by fueling such unimportant matters as the wearing of the newest fashions? Children cannot see the absurdity of mass competition for such material items: to children these things can consume them and become all too important to them. But, we as adults can teach our children through the implementation of uniforms, that one must focus on the more important attributes in life! We must teach them that things that seem so significant in their young lives will not be the major role players in their adult lives. Reading, talent, social skills and educational skills far outweigh the ability to dress well.

America needs to wake up before our future generations fall behind in their education to other countries, merely because of our society's materialistic views. The school systems exhibit the necessity for such a program to be implemented and the time to begin such a system is now!





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# COMMITTED TO A CAUSE

by C. Johnette Pritchett

Living through the sixties, especially as an adolescent, proved to be a unique experience. Looking back, I find it difficult, if not impossible, to pinpoint any one element causing the unrest of this decade. Instead, a multitude of factors fueled this general air of rebellion: the bureaucratic mess of the government, the "bomb", the Cold War, the Vietnam War, the population explosion, and especially violations of human rights. As a generation, we looked toward idealistic values and goals. We wanted to right all the wrongs -- to find perfect solutions for problems of an imperfect world. I do not know specifically when my rebellious nature surfaced. Perhaps it was an innate, yet heretofore dormant, characteristic, or maybe it began as an adolescent attitude to challenge authority and to question values. Thus, given the conditions of the times combined with my rebellious attitude, I emerged as the perfect candidate for organizing an opposition group.

Originally, only a handful of irate students at Winfield Mt. Union High School met informally during the early months of 1968 to discuss our antiquated dress code. At this time, we decided to hold regular meetings and named ourselves the C.S.R. (the Coalition for Student Rights). Perhaps my motivational abilities led to my being chosen as leader-- I could rile even the most apathetic persons. In the beginning, we were viewed only as rebels, given no respect from authorities, and in general we made very little progress. In retrospect, the cause for which we first became involved seemed petty, but more significantly, it started the ball rolling.

The turning point in our organization came when the realities of the Vietnam War hit home. To this small, mid-west town of Winfield, Iowa, it was a major crisis -- our first hometown casualty.

Robert "Barney" Royer, Jr., not yet twenty years old, returned from Vietnam as a corpse. (At that time, the voting age was twenty-one.) Here, then, was a young man who was drafted, forced to fight for and die for a country in which he had no legislative voice. This was legislation without representation! Was this not the reason we had fought for our independence? Enraged by this injustice, this violation of human rights, the attention of our group shifted from changing the dress code to lowering the voting age. This also represented a major turning point in my attitude. I was no longer involved in making a change-- I was committed to it.

Our course of action followed definite steps although they were not all laid out at the beginning. Instead, they developed as our cause gained momentum and support. With the first step (formation of an organized group) accomplished, we began our next course of action: to rally support from other students. We split up, each talking to a different set of classmates and friends. We wrote to our Student Council, petitioning for and receiving permission to give a speech at their meeting. Although we numbered only a handful in the beginning, each one's enthusiasm fueled our own individual burning for justice. Gaining momentum, we also held lunch-hour rallies and gave speeches on the school lawn.

At this point, most students had at least heard of our cause, and many loyal supporters joined our group. We now had over fifty members -- a significant voice in a school totalling only about two hundred students. However, we realized that all this student support could not change anything (since the voting age could not be lowered by these students who could not vote in the first

place). Therefore, our next plan was to take our message beyond the school yard to the community. To do this, we needed pamphlets logically stating our views and requesting support from the voters. Printed material would attract attention, keep a concrete reminder in front of the voters, and hopefully emphasize and add credibility to our mission. To raise money necessary for the costs of printing, the C.S.R. advertised and held a Saturday work sale. We hired out to anyone in the community who needed work done. Some did housework and yardwork; some cleaned out barn stalls, basements, and garages; others stocked shelves and mopped floors after hours at the local grocery. Whatever the job, the results amazed us. We earned far more money than we needed. We then proceeded to distribute pamphlets not only to students, but also to townspeople. Volunteers stuck them on windshields all over town, and the grocery store helped us by tucking one in every grocery bag. Many in the community, while not ardent supporters, at least recognized the validity of our point of view.

We had amassed many supporters, yet that alone would not change national conditions. Therefore, we began what was probably our most significant effort: writing letters to those in public office. We believed that there was power in numbers, so we needed many letters petitioning our cause. We devised a plan to utilize our leftover money and attain our objective. In those days graduating classes still took class trips and consequently spent much free time and effort on fund-raising projects. So, we took the balance of our work day money and offered it as a cash prize to the class which turned in the most letters pleading our cause. The response was overwhelming. The exuberant sophomore class won, turning in an average of almost ten letters per person!

Following this big push, our final efforts involved other schools. We wrote them letters, asking them to organize support groups in their areas and giving them our ideas and suggestions. A few months later an amendment to lower the voting age appeared on the state ballots. Shortly thereafter, this was ratified and the legal voting age in Iowa became eighteen. We felt pride in our accomplishment -- thinking that we at least had a small part in bringing forth a constructive change in our efforts. We did not want negative attention.

We neither staged sit-ins nor promoted riots -- both popular at that time. Basically, we only wanted recognition of the validity of the cause to which we were committed and the support necessary to change the injustice of the voting age. Like my grandfather used to tell me, there is a vast difference between involvement and commitment. He would cite an example of bacon and eggs and further emphasize his point by stating slowly, "Now the chicken was involved, but the hog ... he was committed!" Grandpa was right.



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# Transitions

by Jenine Watson

As I hustled along the city streets in a solitary, headlong rush to keep up with myself, I mentally reviewed a list of the day's errands and obligations. Both children had been dispatched to the babysitter, a sprint had been made through a drug store for cosmetic supplies, eight hours had been dutifully contributed to the cause of paying bills, and ninety minutes had been surrendered to the whims and fancies of a hair stylist.

While moving along and trying to remember the one last item on an ever elusive list that still needed to be done, I caught a fleeting glimpse of a familiar face in a store window. My pace slowed as I tried to identify the image, a reflection teasingly mnemonic, yet strange. With curiosity aroused, I wheeled around and headed back toward the window, hoping to get another glance at this obscure figure.

Staring back was a face full of shock. How silly and surprised I was to discover that the visage before me was my own reflection, barely recognizable now, even to me. Suddenly, all of the changes that had been discreetly taking place within me struck with full force. Could this actually be the same stubborn, headstrong tomboy who used to glare back at me from my mirror? The transition from wallflower to centerpiece had been a drastic one!

Gone was the old, drab sweatshirt and battered jean jacket. In their place was a brightly colored ski coat over a pretty pink sweater. Soft, wavy curls now replaced the straight, dull strands on a once defiant head. Covering a pale blotchy complexion was a natural base makeup high-lighted by rosy cheeked powder and blue eye shadow to match the color of the eyes. As I scratched my newly curled head in wide-eyed wonder, I noticed the glimmer of pink nail polish and laughed out loud at the absurdity of it all. I wondered what else had changed how different am I really and what of the things that cannot be seen?

Hopefully, with age comes maturity. As the adolescent blinders are allowed to fall away, we see ourselves and our world with a broader perspective. Old worn out habits and grudges are finally released; new

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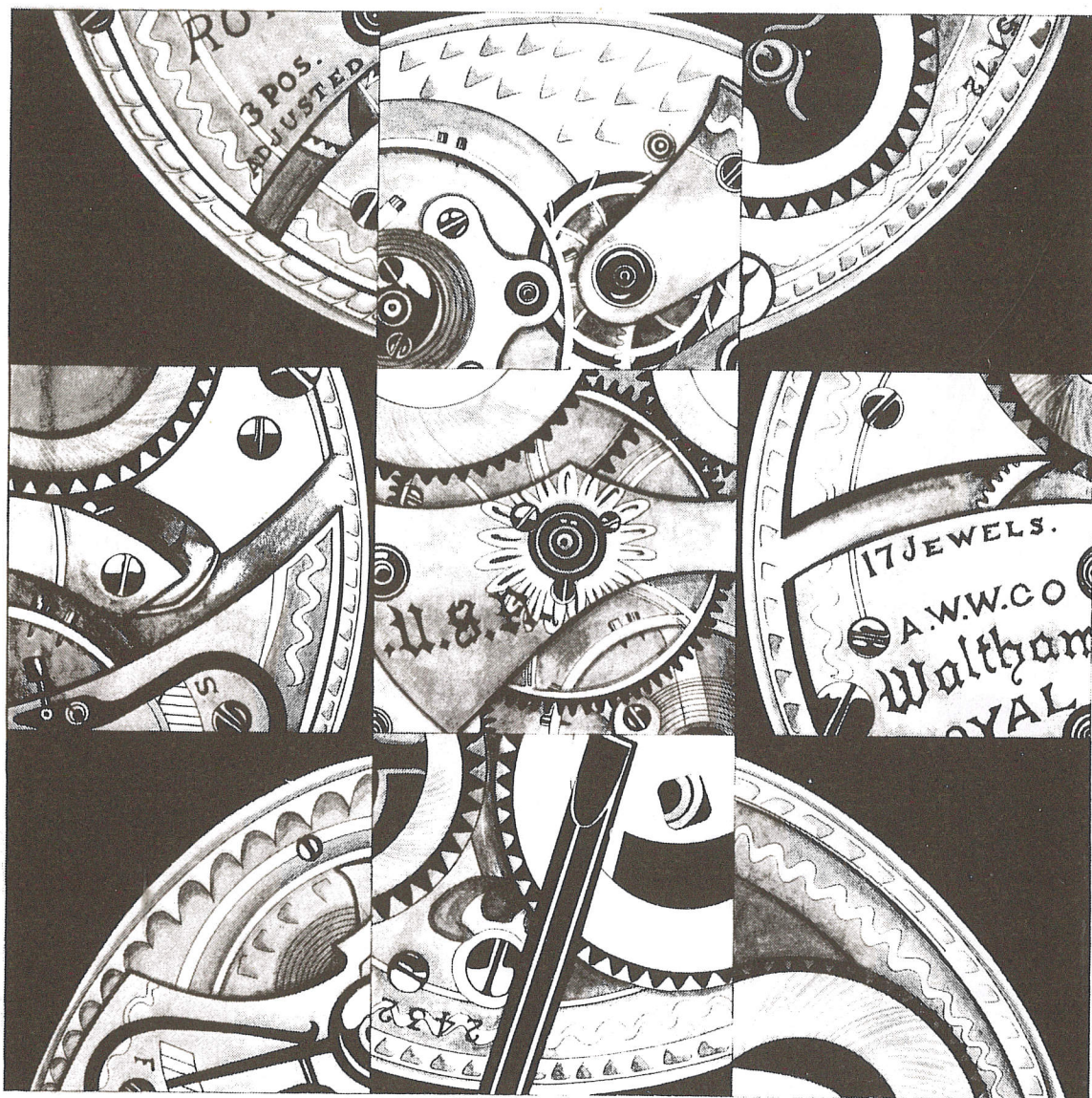
ambitions and dreams are contemplated. The possibility of going beyond mere existence to real living drifts into the mind as a tiny seed which first having been blown about by the wind finally lands, takes root, and begins to flourish. The stuck-in-a-rut syndrome is finally seen for what it really is; constricting shackles by which we have so fearfully bound ourselves. Now, however, the release from these manacles of self-imposed habit seems possible--even exciting.

Without a doubt, the single most essential ingredient in any stage of growth is freedom--the freedom to stretch and learn, to advance ourselves into another realm of understanding. If the strict restraints which result from a lifestyle based primarily on conformity can be eliminated, then our newfound freedom can set in motion the momentum needed to become as fully human and fully alive as we can be.

But what was it that prompted this sudden enlightenment, this belated transformation? I smiled to myself, and a warm feeling engulfed me as my thoughts turned from self-musing toward a special friend who had displayed a kindness and compassion, combined with a patient understanding I had never known before. Suddenly, I remembered the final, unfinished errand of the day. After one last satisfied look at the window, I headed toward the purchase of a thank-you card, an expression of gratitude for one who had instilled within me this new perspective toward life and living. As I begin to understand the principle and power of faith, positive thinking, and self-confidence, I now realize that I am bound by no limitations, and I can take myself as far as I want to go!

Life is actually made up of many such transitions from one stage to the next, from this point to that. We are all constantly moving and changing. With effort, faith, love and comradeship, such transitions will always reflect more than mere physical change, but also spiritual growth and reinforcement of the belief that man's destiny tends toward much greater things than the conventions and restrictions of society usually foster.









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# Dane's Joke

by Mary Ann Combs

*I remember my first sight of you on my midnight rounds as you stood in the doorway of 614. You with your arms in the air pounding on the walls. You looked like some albino ape wrapped in your white gauze dressings. You were angry and you lashed out at everything. There was blood everywhere. On the walls, in the air conditioning vent, all over the curtains. Blood spewed from your half-disconnected subclavian intravenous that you pulled. You fought us. It took four of us to drag you to bed and to right the mess you made. We got you to bed and nursed you in spite of yourself.*

*Your spite was like a venom. We fixed the burns and grafted and cleansed the infected areas. You spat in our faces.*

*I remember the morning I found the maggots in your eye, a gift from the lone fly that managed to get into the hospital. I remember cleansing your face, irrigating your eye to wash out the maggots and lastly, I remember almost scalping you because my hands shook so.*

*I shook internally, too, and I had to take four compazine tablets to*

*combat the nausea I felt before I could even face those maggots. Your face healed even after all that.*

*You made it! Your face healed- on the outside. I couldn't understand your anger. Dane. I didn't understand the problem of a man's feelings having to cope with pink skin grafts on a black face. I didn't realize that the pigmentation would not come with the new skin grafts. I did not understand.*

*Just as I did not understand, that day four months after your admission, when you were released from the hospital and you shot yourself. I just saw a healed outside. I could have shot you myself. I was so angry at you for all that hard work wasted.*

*Your joke was a lasting one, Dane. I don't work the burn unit anymore.*

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# Death In The Classroom

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by Cathee Roehrig

*Walking into the classroom from the darkened hallway, I am immediately bombarded by the glare of fluorescent lighting. It bounces off stainless steel and ceramic fixtures forcing my eyes into sharper focus. I am now surrounded by the embalming room at Wayne State University's School of Mortuary Science.*

*Quickly, I survey the inventory of menacing forceps and specialized tools strewn about the countertops. I watch as students, bent over cadavers, reach for jars of unidentifiable mixtures that are wedged between rubber gloves, cotton gauze and books. The room is alive with action, yet focused on death.*

*The atmosphere seems cold to me. The temperature could be below normal, but perhaps it is only my body adjusting to the thought of what activities are performed in this room. I try not to shiver.*

*Naked, leathered bodies lie on metallic embalming tables. My eyes do not mean to stare, but are repeatedly drawn to the pale faces of these nameless forms. Students, indifferent to the tasks they must complete, clean and sew and fuss over their assignments, while I cannot believe that the faces I*

*stare at were once living, speaking human beings. The feeling of how final this all seems will not leave my thoughts.*

*Rushing water from yellowed hoses streams over the tables, washing blood and excrement into puddles on either side of the bodies. The blood and water mix to form pinkish swirls of color that spiral down towards the floor drain. Once vital, life giving blood; now only a waste product to be disposed of.*

*The sickening smells of death and formaldehyde permeate my senses. My hands reek of the room's odor as I bring them to my face. It is a stench long remembered, and I turn to the doorway to escape its hold.*

*As I walk back down the hallway and away from this lesson in death, my mind reels from what it has just witnessed. I vow to perceive my future hopes and worries from an entirely different viewpoint; for the outcome of life is death, and time now seems so extremely precious to me.*



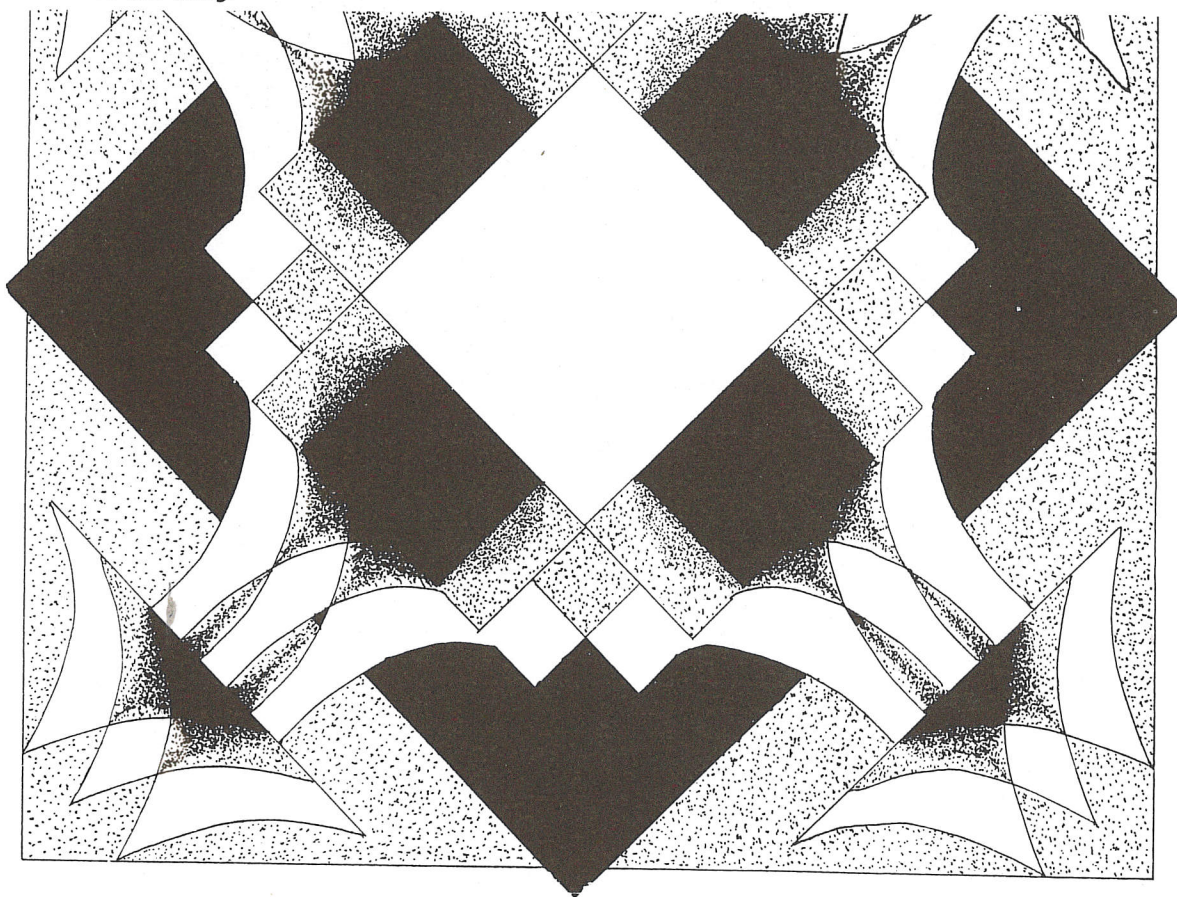
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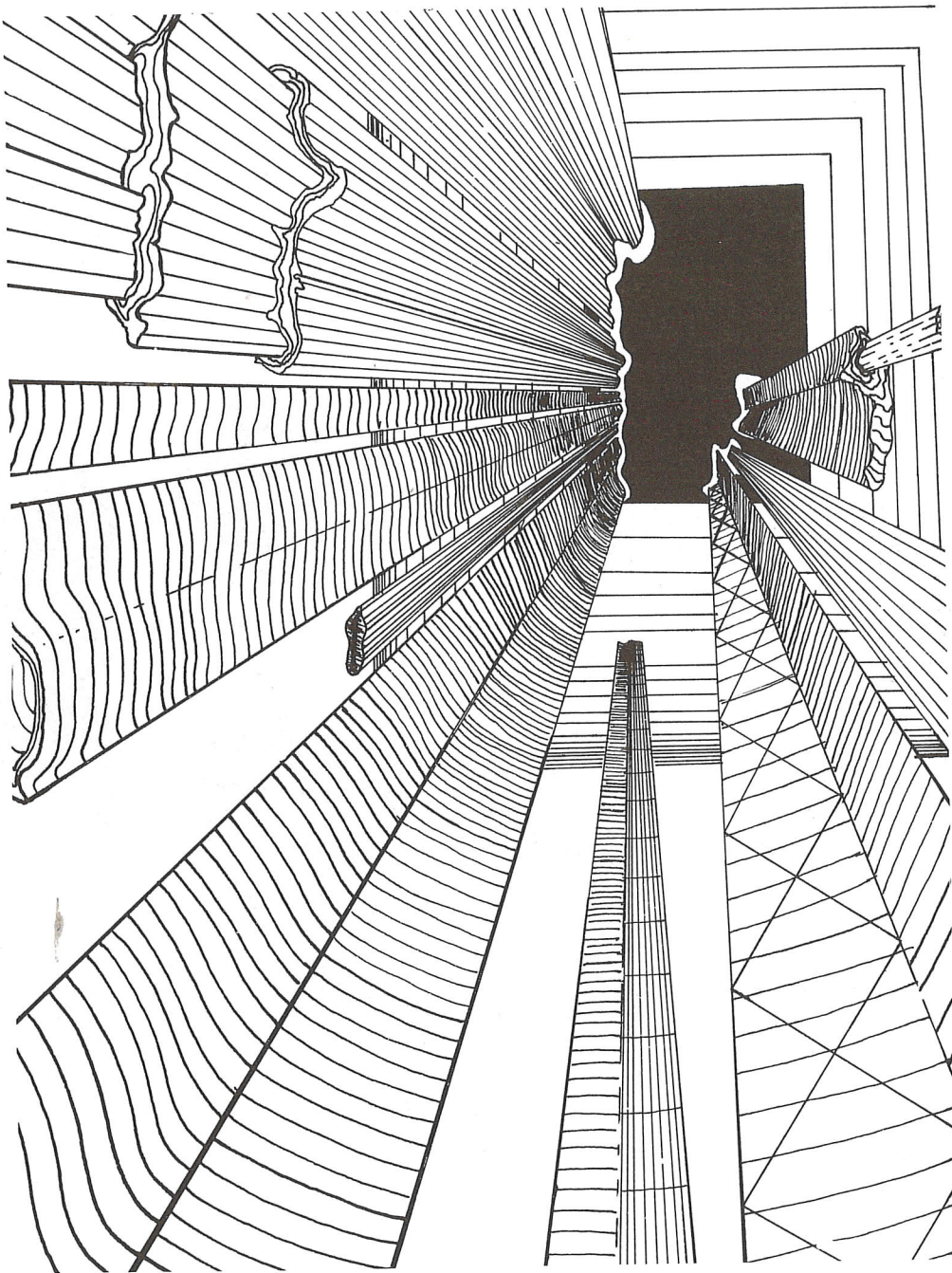
# PERSPECTIVES

This year's theme, Perspectives, offers artists a unique opportunity - the chance to focus sharply a point of view.

In a democracy, it is altogether proper that we have impassioned views. In the public forum arena, ideas contend and clash. Artists rightly force us to examine cherished traditions that may have long gathered dust, or to experience anew the freshness of love, or a summer's breeze.

From the artists of St. Clair County Community College we welcome their pointed perspectives on life and living.







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# Choices

by Mark Hoewisch

As they met in silence and secrecy to love one another, they were fully aware that what they were doing was altogether immoral and evil in the eyes of the townspeople. However, in their hearts they were doing no wrong. They felt complete happiness and total security when they were together, but most important of all, they loved each other with a love that would keep them together until death parted them. These were two law-abiding citizens, well-respected young adults of the community, and loved by everyone who knew them. They were also two young men: two men who would be ridiculed and discriminated against for the rest of their lives because their sexual preference allowed them to love one another.

These two men are not the only people who feel mutual attraction for members of the same sex. There are thousands of people in society who feel the same way, yet they are unable to do anything about their feelings, or are they? Why are some people attracted to members of the same sex, and others are not? It is a fact that people are able to choose who they have sex with, but is that choice making them one hundred percent happy? People, no matter who they are or what they are, should have the right to choose what is going to make them happy, unless, of course, other people are hurt. It is wrong for society to make the choice for an individual when the individual has made a choice that will make him happy.

To begin with, do people actually have a choice in the matter of their sexuality? Do people wake up one morning and decide to become sexually attracted to members of the same sex? That hardly seems to be a likely possibility when society is so dead set against the entire issue. There has to be something in the individual chemistries of people which enables them to have their own sexuality preference. The preference people have remains with them for the rest of their lives. They can bury it, they can deny it, but it will always remain somewhere within them. This is what they have to deal with. Although they do not have the choice of a preference, they do have the choice of doing what will make them happy. They need to make the choice which will give them complete happiness. If the happy choice calls for them to deny their preference and go against what they have been given, then that is what they need to do, but if that happy choice calls for them to go with their preference, then they should be allowed to do so without society breathing down their back and telling them that what they are doing is wrong.

On the other side of the fence, however, there are the people who control society and make the rules the people are to live by. They view homosexuals as outcasts, people their children must stay away from because they might "catch" something, and people who are going to hell because their lives are immoral and wrong. These people base their views on

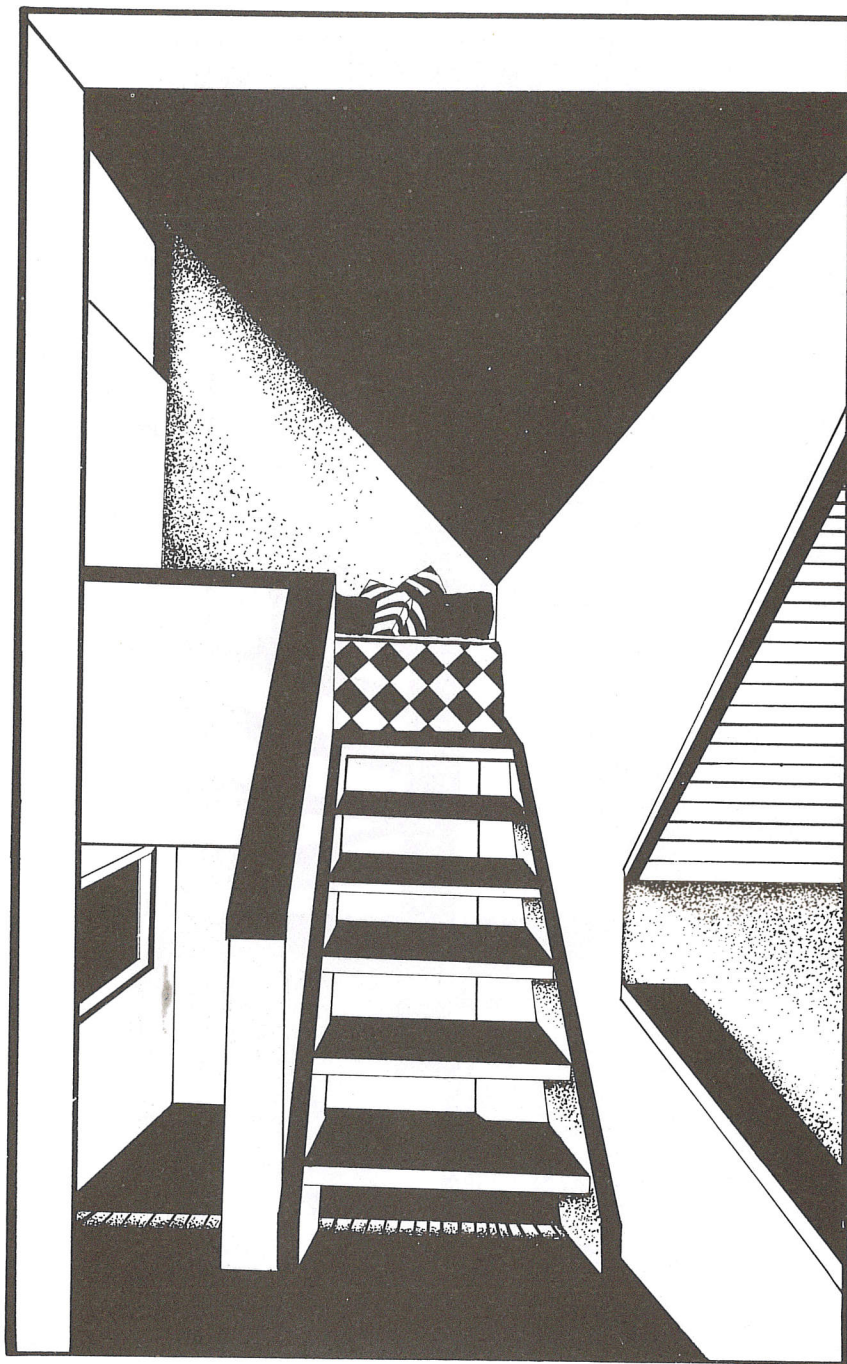
their own sexual preference and what they have been taught. God and the Bible also play an important role in the ideas of society, people have been taught that God has created everything, and everything that goes against God and the Bible is wrong, but have they stopped to consider that when God created man, He also created everything that went into the makeup of man? The answer is obvious. They have not stopped to consider the fact that these "immoral" people actually do not have a choice in their preference. The public does not have the right to look down upon someone or discriminate against the person just because he/she is different. Granted, the practices that some homosexuals participate in are unhealthy, unclean, and sometimes downright dangerous, but many heterosexuals are also involved in the same types of practices, and when it comes to drunken orgies, many of the people do not care whether it is a female or male they are having sex with. Unfortunately, it is the homosexuals who are "nailed" for these acts of indecency. The heterosexuals are allowed to continue on with their lives because, after all, they belong to the elite group of people which rules society. Homosexuals are nothing but scapegoats for the immoral practices of society.

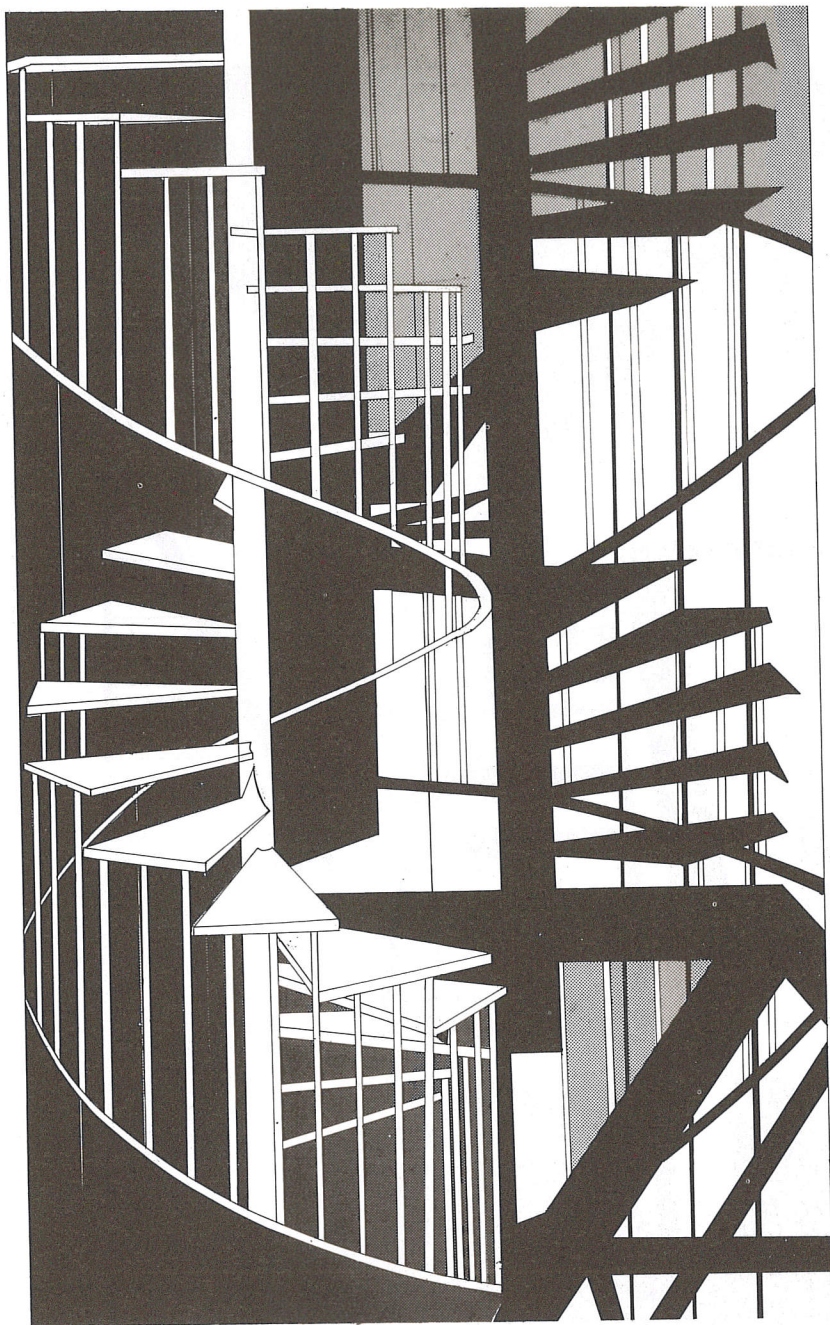
The whole debate boils down to the issue of love. There is a definite distinction between love and sex. Society views the love two men or two women have for each other as a sick and perverted type of sexual practice. It may be when the issue is just dealing with sex, but the same is true for heterosexuals. Sex without love is just an act: an act which can be both degrading and humiliating when not used with the essential ingredient which makes it beautiful and right. That essential and special ingredient is love. If two people love each other with and for everything they have, there should be no

barriers of sexual preference. They should be allowed to practice their love freely and without inhibitions. However, this does not mean they are to go out in public and blatantly promote what they are doing. The same is true for heterosexual love. Lovers do not need to broadcast their love for each other in the eyes of the public. There is a time and a place for everything, and the place for the act of loving in an abode tucked away from the public eye.

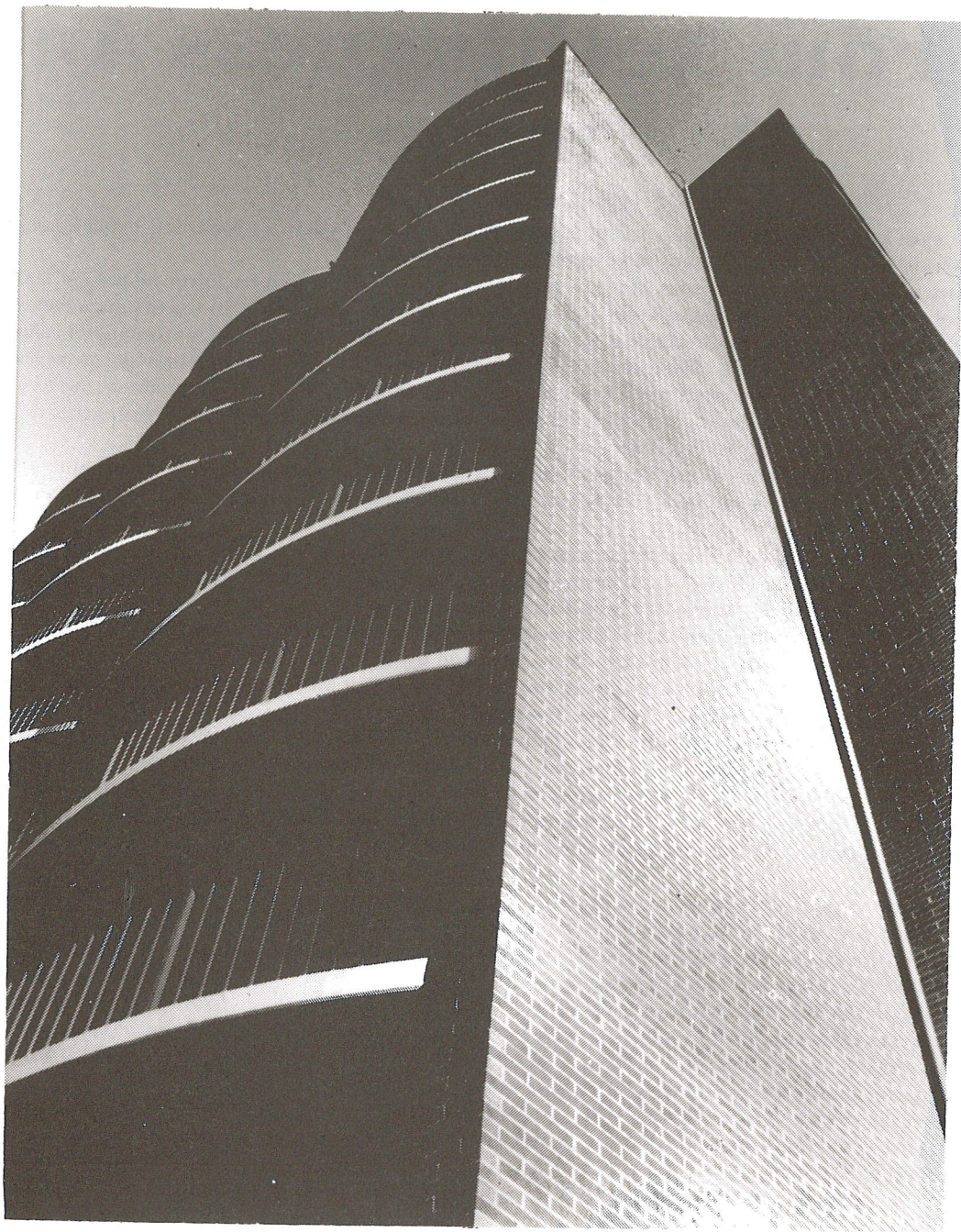
Society does not have the right to govern what an individual has no control over. Homosexuals are not "fags," they are not "queer," and they are not "funny." They are people who are individualistic in their thinking and their ways, but they are the same as everybody else in their needs of love and affection. No one has the right to take away the happiness they have found just because it is different from the happiness society has deemed correct.













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# From Nothingness An Image

by James Hibbert

My eyes open. My mind races. It searches though nineteen years of recorded experiences. Searching for a memory that wouldn't mind being exposed.

From out of nothingness comes the smeared silhouette of two trees. A background paints itself the colors of dusk. The sun, caught escaping, halfway over the terminator. In the distance I see a house, my house. From this house comes a small boy. I wonder if this boy realizes that in ten years he will be sitting in a college classroom remembering himself as a child. I watch this boy cross the dirt road and enter the marsh. I see it from far off, as if I were floating twenty feet above. Just as I become aware of this distance my mind zooms in until my view is that of the boy's. I realize that this boy and I are seeing and feeling as one.

My mature thoughts merge with those of my youth. As a child, courage was boundless, and fear was left to the monsters my imagination would create. Thoughts of consequence were unheard of.

As my mature mind pondered this, my young body was climbing one of the two trees that grew across from my house. These trees were roughly the same size, and grew eight feet apart. When I reached a height of about fifteen feet I could see across the entire marsh. With this view came a rush of a thousand memory fragments, fragments of the adventures I created to pass the time. This was not just a tree I was standing on but a look-out post and my job was to survey the border watching for invaders. Oh God, memories. But wait, my young self is not looking out for infiltrators. I am staring at the other tree and beyond that, the road. Why?

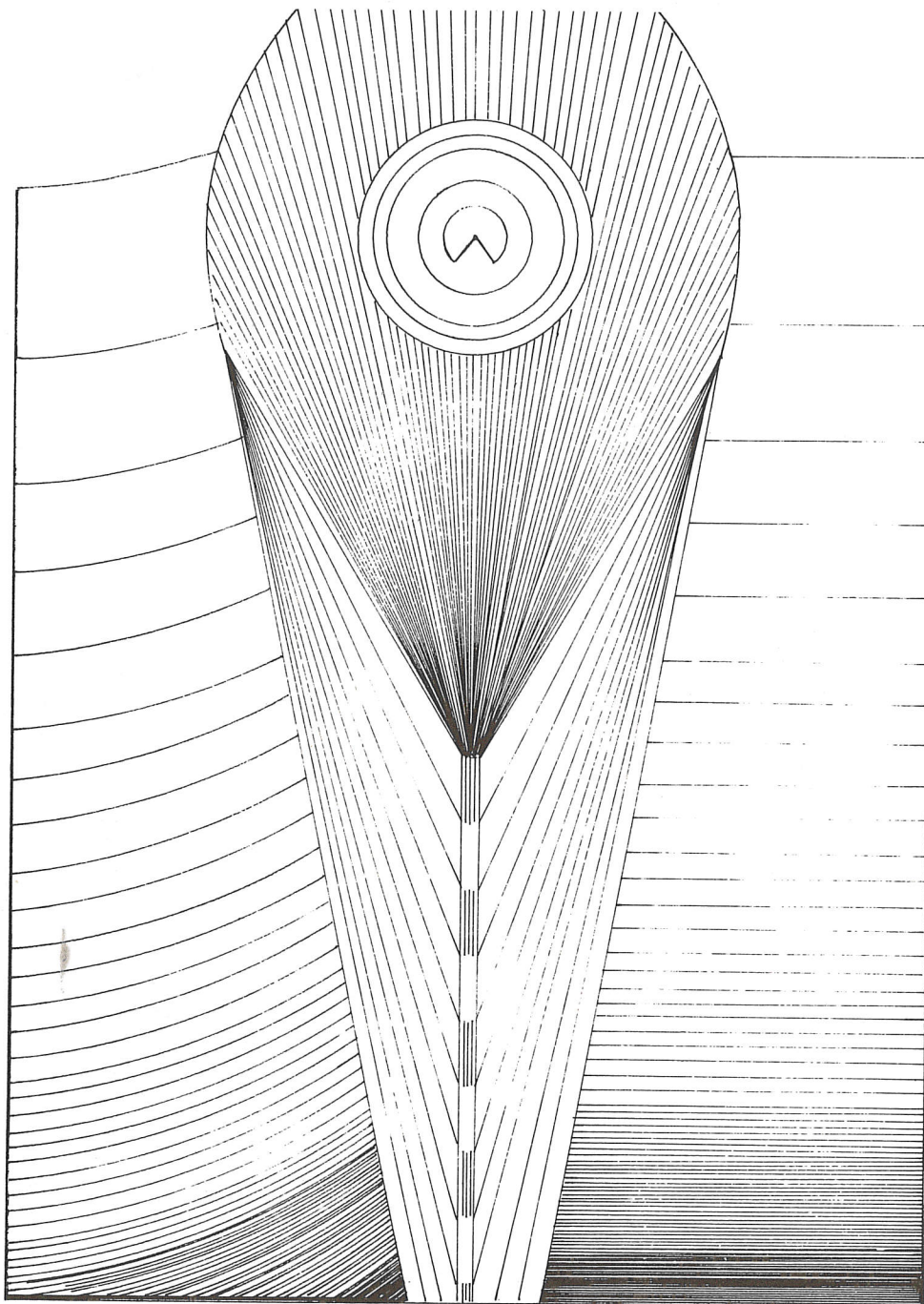
"I can make it; no problem," I heard my young self say aloud. This is when I realize my other senses had kicked in. I was no longer just a parasitic pair of roaming eyes. I could feel the rough and crumbling bark beneath my shortened fingers. The strong smell, and slight taste, of toasted marsh mud cooling in the evening sun. All of this became almost overpowering. Then, the words of my young self began to sink in. Make it, what was he, I, talking about. I was going to jump. I had no idea why.

So, here I stand clutching on to one tree contemplating a jump to the other. I noticed the sun. It was just a blood red sliver in the horizon. It had taken my youthful self forty-five minutes to come to the same conclusion that my mature self arrived at in forty-five seconds. That conclusion being, "This is stupid. What the hell am I doing?"

It's about this time that I see my neighbor, Mr. Sears, walking down the road. He sees me and says in his most serious tone, "Boy, what in the hell are you doing up there?" I just stood and stared; he turned and left. My laughter started in spurts. Soon I was drowning in it, gasping for breath. When my laughter finally stopped, I was firmly fastened to the other tree. I had jumped!

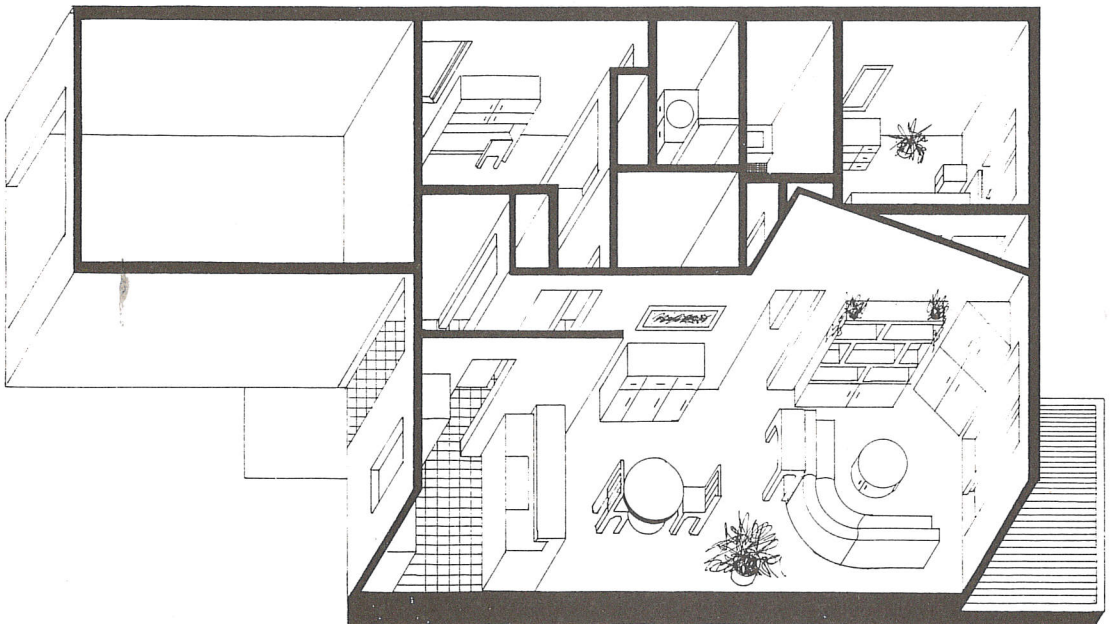
It seemed that, as I rationalize it now, in the face of an absurd challenge one must take into account all of the choices, chances and consequences of your next move. After all these factors are examined, then you can go ahead and do it. No matter how dumb your choice is, at least you thought about it. As this chunk of wisdom from my past fades, so do my surroundings. My eyes slowly open.





Scale: 1/4" = 1'

OBLIQUE





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# “Perspectives # 1”

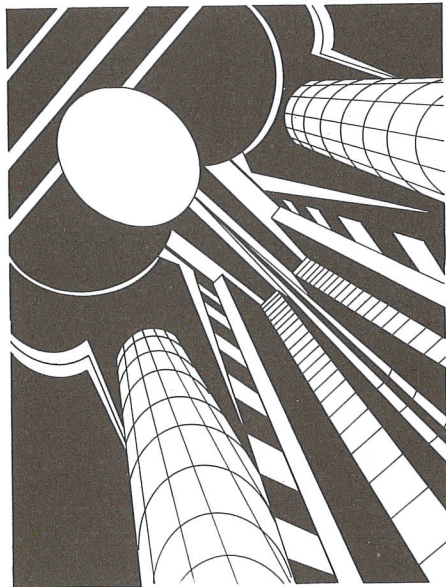
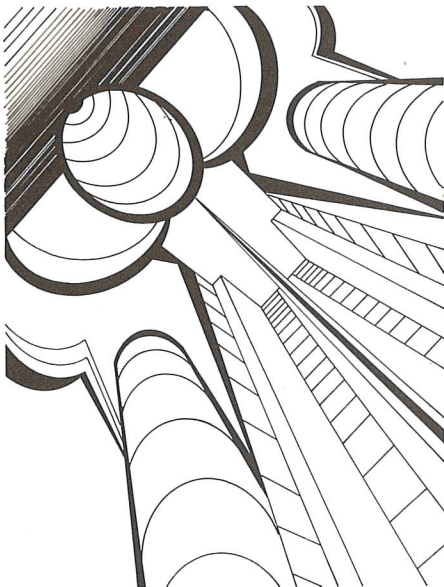
by Eric Halamka

I am Wind  
reaching, feeling  
hear me  
howl

I am Water  
flowing, freezing  
touch me  
tide

I am Night  
smothering, enveloping  
watch me  
wonder

I am Pain  
drilling, shattering  
feel me  
fear



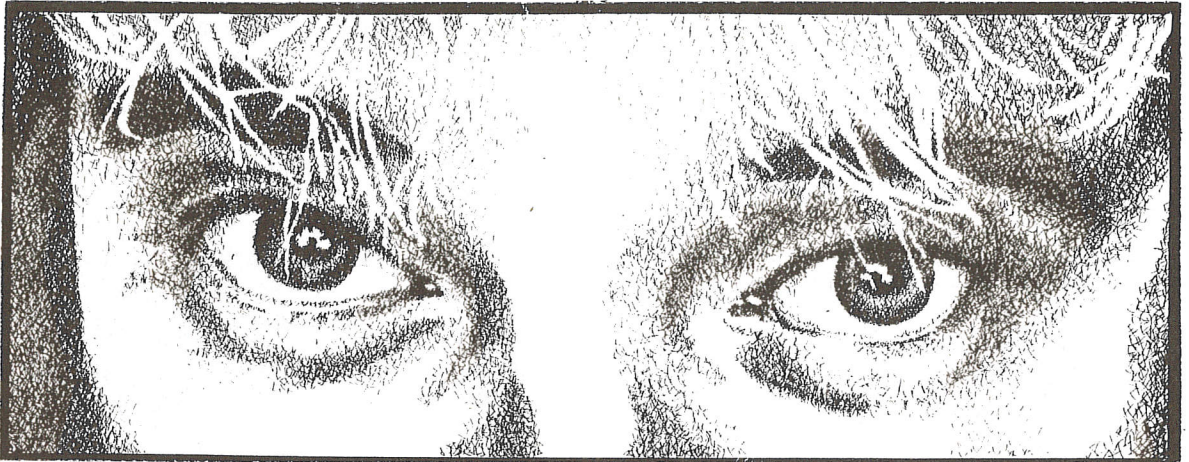


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# CRIME DOESN'T PAY... Or Does It?

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by C. Johnette Pritchett



"Yes, officer, I am positive," I repeated for the third time, no longer making an effort to keep the tone of irritability from my voice. Of course I could pick him out of a lineup. I could see his face clearly every time I closed my eyes.

We had been married only a few months. Like most newlyweds, we had plenty of love and not much money. I lived at our home and worked while Jim was gone six to eight weeks at a time touring with a road group. His pay was generous, but the expenses of living on the road ate up much of the profits. Therefore, he was training a replacement and soon would be changing careers. Jim had been on an eight-week tour; we had not seen each other since before Thanksgiving. Finally, the band would be in Iowa City, only three hours from home! We had plans to spend the week-end together at the lovely hotel where the band performed. What we had anticipated as a wonderful rendezvous would actually become a fiasco — but one we would look back on with laughter for years to come.

I arose long before dawn on that particular Friday in January. I wanted plenty of time to pack and to take care of last minute details (setting the timers on the lights, taking a set of keys to the neighbors, and phoning my mother) so that I could leave for Iowa City immediately after work. The drive seemed endless, but I arrived by 6:00 p.m. and we shared a lovely candlelight dinner before Jim went to work.

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Our room, although bordering on the luxurious, featured standard motel decor; two double beds, a table flanked by two easy chairs, and a dresser along the wall opposite the beds. Late that night as I turned out the lights, I noticed that the bed nearest the door looked more like a closet. My suitcase lay opened in the center and both of our coats were near the foot. My clothes were strewn over everything else on the bed, while Jim's were hastily thrown on the easy chair next to where he slept. Although I felt slightly uncomfortable sleeping "au naturelle", I was too tired to exert the effort necessary to locate my flannel nightgown. I listened to the steady rhythm of Jim's breathing in the dark. Perhaps I was over exhausted by 3:00 a.m. or maybe the strange surroundings made it difficult for me to fall asleep.

I had finally dozed off when a noise awakened me. As a tall thin man entered our room, I realized that the noise was the sound of a key turning the heavy metal lock! His thin frame was silhouetted by the hallway lights behind him and his face was covered entirely by a ski mask. I raised up on one elbow, trying to comprehend the situation. "Lay down, lady, or I'll blow ya' away," the gravelly voice threatened in a loud muffled whisper. Obediently, I returned to a prone position, at first unable to believe that this was actually happening. Then I noticed an accomplice out in the hallway. He was shorter and stockier than our intruder, and his face was bathed in light as he looked nervously up and down the hallway.

I raised up again and mumbled something profoundly unintelligible, "What are you doing?"

Once more he repeated the threat, "I said \_\_\_\_\_ lay down or I'll blow your \_\_\_\_\_ head off!" (And he inserted a few very colorful modifiers which I have chosed not to repeat.) Again I obeyed the order. I heard rustling plastic as he filled garbage bags with our possessions. Then, as quickly as it had begun, the door closed and the room was silent. I closed my eyes also, my mind reviewing the events of the last few minutes with disbelief. Exhaustion, however, overwhelmed me and I remember thinking that I would just go to sleep now and tell Jim all about this in the morning.....zzzzzzz. Luckily, I jumped up with the startling realization that morning would be too late.

I nudged Jim. Usually he is a very sound sleeper, evidenced by the fact that he slept through the entire traumatic event. Somehow he was surprisingly alert, pulling on clothes, turning on lights, and grabbing the phone all with what seemed one motion. The night desk clerk finally answered and Jim yelled, "Frank, we've just been robbed! Call the police!" Slamming down the receiver, Jim started out the door. I begged him to stay in our room, fearing for his safety. But Jim has never been much of a sideline spectator in any situation, so he hurried out in pursuit of the thieves.

Then, alone in the room, I assessed the predicament. I discovered that everything from the other bed was gone: my suitcase, our coats, and all my clothing. Now, with lights on and actions having been taken, the dream-like events focused into reality. The full force of this realization hit me with a broad spectrum of emotions. All at once I felt rage, fear and helplessness which were greatly enhanced by my lack of sleep. Unable to take any constructive measures, I did the next best thing — I cried!

Luckily, my sister was a student at the University of Iowa at that time. So, drying my eyes, I wrapped myself in the sheet and phoned her. Carefully controlling the hysteria in my voice, I patiently explained our dilemma, and asked her to bring me some of her clothes,

Meanwhile, Jim had heard the pair on the second floor where the only rear exit from the building is located. He hurried downstairs, and approaching an ell in the hallway, he realized that he would probably meet them at the corner. His mind raced — one had a gun — he couldn't jump both at once — what if he jumped the wrong one? With his heart pounding and adrenelin



pumping, Jim ended the pursuit with a face-to-face confrontation. Normally never at a loss for words, he found something totally ridiculous to say. "What are you guys doing?" he asked in a nonchalant, nice-weather-we-are-having tone. They mumbled something about looking for room 3213, so Jim sent them upstairs to the third floor to get them away from the second floor exit. Suddenly he realized he had sent them back to our room! Quickly he apologized for this error and then re-directed them to the first floor. Of course any idiot knows that a room number beginning with a three will not be on the first floor. But these two, obviously wanting no hassles, obediently reversed directions and headed downstairs toward the first floor. As Jim ran upstairs, intending to call the front desk again, he heard the second floor exit door slam. So, he chased them outside, knee-deep in snow and without a coat at eight degrees below zero, across a neighboring field, and out to the road in front of the motel—right into the path of the arriving police! Of course, Jim was now extremely brave with these back-up reinforcements on the scene, and he intended to kill them bare-handed. Naturally, the officers would not allow this solution.

While one officer went with Jim to locate the stolen property which had been abandoned in the field, another came to our room to interview me. I gave him as thorough a recollection as I could, describing minute details of the robbery. During this time I sat on the bed, wrapped in only a sheet, and it occurred to me that this was a humorous situation. How could he keep a straight face? My reflection in the mirror showed me that he was interviewing a naked lady wrapped in a sheet, with hair like a rat nest, redrimmed and bloodshot eyes, and black mascara streaking down her cheeks. I chuckled through the remainder of the interview.

My sister finally arrived with some clothes. We were escorted to the police station to identify property and prisoners and to fill out formal charges. Little did we know that all our belongings would be held as evidence until the trial three months later! We would have to make duplicates of all our keys, get replacements of our driver's licenses, credit cards, and checks, and forfeit our coats and my clothing until spring. We also had to replace toiletries and personal items from the suitcase (toothbrush, combs, brushes, toothpaste, mouthwash, deodorant and perfumes). We identified the prisoners through a two-way mirror and then went into another room to identify our belongings. There were several garbage bags full of "loot" since this pair had hit several motels in the area. Jim, our proverbial comic, claimed all the loose twenty dollar bills. The officer gave a wry chuckle. "You want to hear something ironic?" He continued without waiting for a reply, "All the loose money goes back to the crooks! It is a free country and anybody can carry money around in a garbage bag instead of a wallet if he wants to. So, unless the money is inside an identifiable object or unless the serial number is known, it all goes to the thieves!"

We stared at the loose bills, mostly twenties and fifties but several hundreds, too, in astonishment. We looked at each other and Jim expressed my thoughts aloud, "Crime does pay!"

By now it was after 8:00 Saturday morning, and I was beginning my twenty-eighth hour without sleep. As we were leaving, I caught a glimpse of my reflection in the glass doors. My sister's coat was too tight to button and the sleeves were at least three inches too short. The bell-bottom jeans, although stylish at that time, were not such a fashion statement at mid-calf length. My bare feet squished in high heels filled with melted snow. I reminded myself of a bag lady without a bag! The exhaustion and tension of the evening overcame me. Jim and I looked at each other and simultaneously burst out laughing!

# It was the day before

by Jacqueline McAlpine

*It was the day before Christmas Eve and he was home! John, the oldest brother and patriarch to his fatherless siblings, was home! Five eager young faces crowded around him as he took off his wet boots and shook the snow from his cold wool coat.*

*"Now you kids let your brother in and don't maul him to death. He must be tired," Mom admonished. She was bustling around slicing fresh baked bread and serving John's favorite dinner. Like a swarm of bees the four brothers and youngest sister would circle round always pursuing their target. "Johnny can we go skating..sledding... have a snowball fight..play Monopoly..." their requests poured out in a noisy jumble! Oh, to have their big brother home--they could hardly contain their excitement.*

*Even the anticipation of Santa Claus coming was temporarily forgotten--and when remembered only served to heighten their expectations. The resemblance between brothers and sister was more obvious in their shared brother worship. Faces were mutually lit up like the lights on their Christmas tree.*

*"How was your trip from Detroit dear--Did you get many rides?" Mom asked. The eldest ate and fielded questions from all sides. "Johnny, did you know I got all A's on my report card," someone would say only to be interrupted with "John can we go out after you eat--it's not too dark." On it went till Mom finally got them under control and then off to bed.*

*The dreams those pillows held were busy planning the next five days. That's all they had before John would hitch-hike back to work, 45 miles away in Detroit.*

*Sleep was like a wink and then it was Christmas Eve day. John took everyone out to the country to ice skate while Mom stayed at home, in the relative peace and quiet, preparing a hot supper and putting the finishing touches to tomorrow's*

*Christmas celebration.*

*Everyone piled into Mom's old black '67 Ford to go to the skating pond they had discovered some years back. It was considered theirs by virtue that no one else was ever there.*

*Like a treasure the youngest sister held onto the knowledge that she would be included in this all boys club. Even among the other brothers' protests of..."why can she play-she's just a girl!" She knew John, her champion, would always include her. "She can be goalie for one side," was the final word--and it was accepted by all.*

*In the stillness of the woods surrounding the pond, they skated back and forth letting the day wane until even the hardest was tired--or grew tired of the complaints of cold and hunger from the others.*

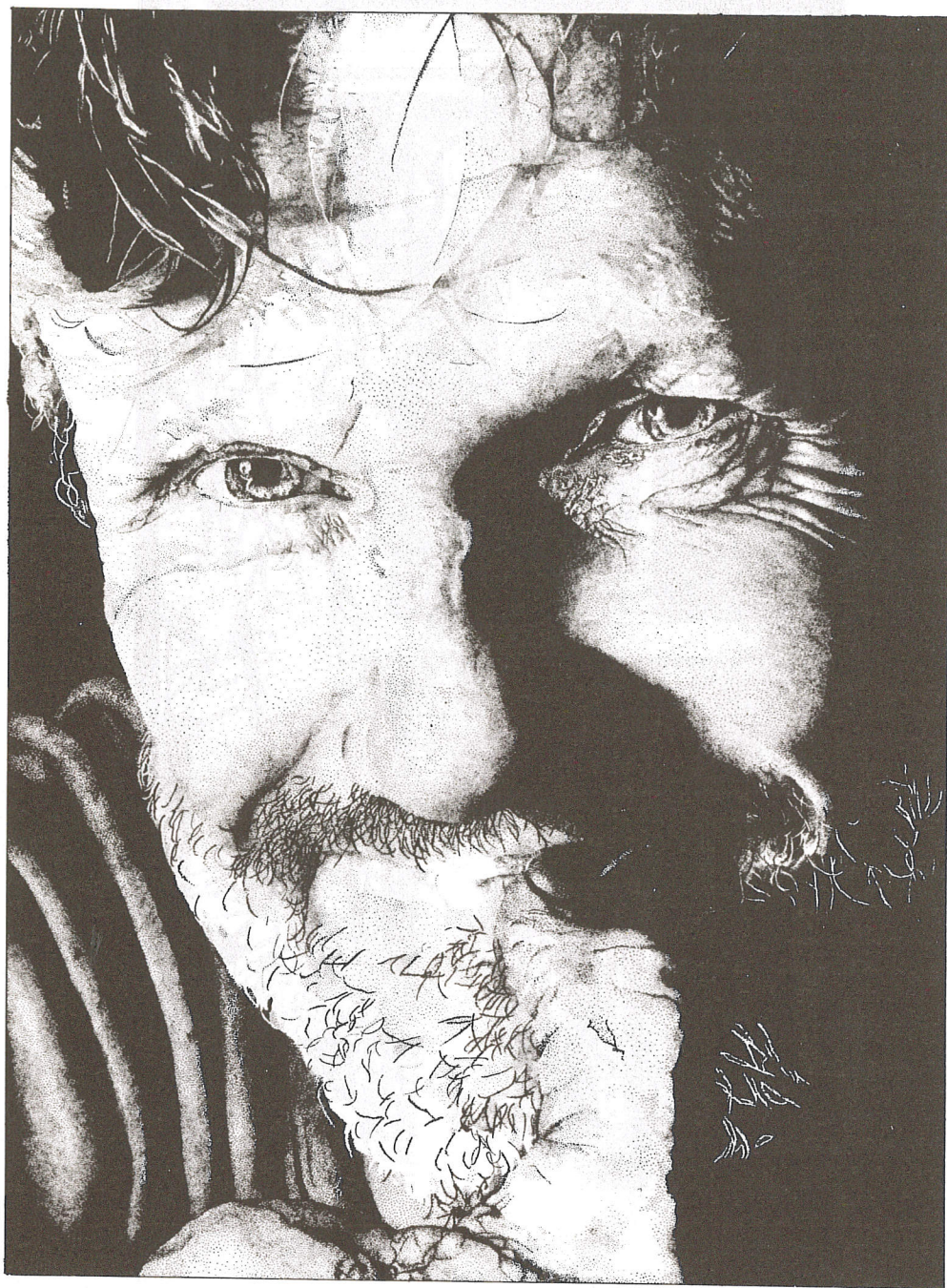
*Home they drove as spirits and appetites grew. Suddenly John braked the car causing it to slide slightly. "Look," he said in a voice charged with wonder and pointed ahead. Six pairs of eyes watched a majestic family of deer as they crossed from one side of the woods to the other--breaths were held as the last deer crossed. A total of 14 deer were led to safety by the leading buck.*

*As they continued their drive home the image of the deer crossing together was stamped upon their minds. They shared an atmosphere of quiet awe from their days experience. Only on entering the house filled by wonderful aromas was the quiet magic broken--then excited voices told Mom about their day. Oldest to youngest washed quickly. They enjoyed the traditional Christmas Eve soup and bread...hearty and hot and leaving enough room for the endless round of holiday treats Mom would bring out from well hidden places.*

*Soon, their healthy appetites satisfied, they would pursue their Christmas Eve pleasures... right up until midnight when John would lead the family through the cold still air to Midnight Mass.*

*Then when tired heads hit the pillows that night, they knew it was only a tease. For Santa would work his magic, and excited voices would call to wake each other up in just a few short hours. Best of all was the knowledge that it was Christmas Day and John would be home for 4 more precious days. Their beloved brother leading them in Christmas fun as surely as the buck had lead the crossing deer. And that was their Christmas.*











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# Mrs. D.

by Cathee Roehrig

Clothed in a bleached out, flimsy floral house-dress, she sits slouched on the wooden kitchen chair. The room is simple in furnishings and is poorly illuminated by one yellow bulb in the center of the ceiling. Shadows produced by this lack-luster source of light descend upon this lone, undersized antiquity of a woman; a woman of eighty-six.

Crinkled arms of translucent parchment, marbled with a faint blue network of veins, reach out to me for an embrace. As we hold each other for a brief, kindly hug, I smell the faded scent of lilac powder. The fragrance of her body helps to ease my fear of this "portrait in bodily decline," and I feel relaxed as I sit down to converse with her.

She speaks to me in raspy, low, warm tones that coincide with her smiling features. We discuss the same topics that we always talk over each week that we visit, but the subject matter is not the significant reason we are together; we merely need the contact that another human being can give.

I watch her face as she expresses her thoughts to me, and I notice the thinning, brittle, gray tufts of curled hair that surround her friendly skeletal face. I note the slight ravine-like pattern of wrinkles upon her facial skin. Each furrow moving as her mouth forms its inaudible sounds, for I am not listening to her words, but am merely observing this existing illustration of old age before me.

Her eyes are magnified by immensely thick eyeglasses that only animate her facial structure into exaggerated, comical proportions as she utters her rambling words to me. I start to hear her conversation once again, and realize that she has become weary and that it is time for me to exit from her world.

We exchange out heartfelt farewells and as we hug again, I notice the feeling of the fragile framework of old skin and bent scaffolding of bone that I now hold in my arms.

As I leave her room, I suddenly feel very sad for her and for myself. She sure doesn't seem to have much to look forward to in her life, and I must confront the knowledge that I too may face the same ravaged finality of time that she now endures.

The only occasion that she now waits for, from that room, is the weekly visit from a sympathetic, loving friend.....the position I now hold.

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# Why Horror?

by Robert Golm

People who don't know me (and those who wish they didn't), always ask me the inevitable question "Why do you like all that horror stuff?" It's simple really, fear is fun. In the words of my literary idol Clive Barker, "There is no delight the equal of dread". Good horror books and films are like taking a ride on a wild roller coaster. The suspense and apprehension of not knowing what to expect are the best antidotes I know for getting your mind off your troubles.

To quote Donald Pleasence, "Perhaps we create artificial horrors to help us cope with the real ones". In reality no one likes to think of death and violence, but project these images onto a movie screen and people line up in droves waiting to buy a ticket.

Even a decomposing, mangled corpse dragging itself across your bedroom floor can seem pretty cheerful in comparison to the threat of a depleting ozone layer, terrorism, AIDS, and the like. We can close our eyes, put down the book, walk out of the theater, but what of the real world? What can we do? Move? Do we create terrors that can be dealt with because we have so little control over the destiny of the world around us?

Horror fiction is in many ways a reflection of ourselves and our deepest, darkest fears transcended to simple and visible means. It provides us with a way of dealing with our nightmares, to bring them to light, to expose, and to conquer. As Stephen King once said "I recognize terror as the finest emotion there is." How true! It also happens to be our oldest emotion.

There is something wonderously vile and appealing about horror fiction in that it allows us to reach out and touch the dread without suffering the consequences. In the confines of our minds the little scenarios of power and revenge we conjure up can be quite satisfying. We can be as childish or diabolical as we like. In Stephen King's world, first you create likable characters, and then you put them in the pot boiler.

I think deep down people like to see unspeakable atrocities and gaze glassy-eyed at catastrophes. Witness the vulture contingent that gathers around auto accidents or shootings. Our morbid curiosity gets the better of us as we slow down, or stop to gawk. In horror films we would be disappointed if we didn't see what's behind the phantom's mask, or what lies beyond the door, waiting. Maybe that explains why America races zestfully toward the book counter, anxious to devour the newest Stephen King offering like a ravenous man before a full and steaming plate.

Examining the complete spectrum of the horror genre, one comes to discover that it's simply a variation on life and its struggles. One of the premier comprehensive voices of horror today is Douglas E. Winter, who edited the book **Prime Evil**. He wrote two other outstanding books which deal in depth with the horror genre and its disciples entitled **Faces of Fear** and **Stephen King; The Art of Darkness**. These books merit notice, for they shed some much needed light on a misunderstood and fascinating field.





# Textured Memories: A Trip To Grandma's

by Shelby J. Clark

*A visit to my grandmother's house was like a trip to the candy store. There were cakes and cookies. There were frosted sugar confectionary pastries that Grandmother called Angel Wings. It was an accurate description, for they seemed to float in a continuous path from the old pink cookie plate to mine, and from there to my waiting lips. With the first bite into one of those Angel Wings, my mouth and tongue felt that they had exploded. The snow white frosted sugar would burst with sweetness and the feathery light cookie would crumble into thousands of shards of pure crunchy delight. At nine years old it was the closest thing I could remember to what, as an adult, I would come to know as complete satisfaction.*

*As long as I had known her, my grandmother had been old. She was older than my mom and dad and I knew at nine, that they were very old. Still it wasn't the same. My mom and dad, even as old as they were, could still do so much more than my grandmother. My mother called grandmother, "Ma", which meant to me that she had to have been old*

*much much longer than either mom or dad. It meant that she had been old even when my mother was young like me. That, I knew, was terribly long ago. I remembered the Sunday school story we learned about the man who lived to be nine hundred years old, and I knew that my Grandma must have known him when she was young.*

*My Grandmother was not very tall. Her back had bent like the old willow in our back yard, and she walked with her head slightly turned toward the ground. Her face was round and I remember pale, crisp eyes the color of azure blue. Her voice was soft and sweet. It was almost melodic in quality and tone. I don't remember hearing her raise her voice or use a harsh tone. Her sparkling eyes and mellow voice made up for the wrinkles and furrows deeply set in her face and her hands. Her hair was as white as the burnt ash my dad would take out of her kitchen stove, and I remember that she pinned her hair into a bun shaped at the back of her head.*

*Old people are scary things to kids. They are the witches in the Brahams fairy tale, the mean thirty-year math and grammar teachers, and the strangers you are never supposed to go with when you are lost. Even if she was old, my grandmother was different. Her kind and gentle mantle covered her like the small patchwork quilt she would wrap around her when she sat down in the evening. Unlike Hansel and Gretel's evil old witch who tried to push them into the oven, my grand-*



mother's oven produced wonderful smells of baking bread and white sugar cookies as big as the moon in a late autumn sky. Her whole demeanor and spirit were one of kindness and love that she showered over the whole family like a summer rain, the small healing drops of wetness that fall on you while the sun still shines.

The first time I ever stayed with Grandmother, I found myself a little nervous. I knew that I would be all right there, but I wasn't sure how I wouldn't be bored since my mother said that I didn't need to take very much along except a single toy and a pair of pajamas. It was just to be overnight and they would pick me up in the morning.

Upon my arrival, I forgot all my worries of being bored. My grandmother and I sat down at the kitchen table which was covered with a printed oil-cloth. She pulled out a an old cigar box full of crayons, and together we colored pictures out of a coloring book. When that became tiring, she brought out a red and black checkerboard with ancient red and black chipped checker disks and we played for hours. She let me win time and time again. After the checker marathon, she asked if I was hungry and she brought out her pink cookie plate filled with sugar-cookies, Angle Wings, and molasses squares. Then she turned and pushed a chair up to the cupboard. Carefully she stood on the chair and searched briefly on the top shelf. When she came down, she was covering in her hand what appeared

to be a tall glass. She went to the ancient refrigerator, took out the milk and filled this glass to the brim with the cold frothy milk, turned again, and sat it down in front of me. As I looked at the glass, I could see a greenish-blue cartoon of some kind of spirally-horned, smiling deer-like animal. Below and around the circumference ran a poem, "I is for Impala, an African deer that can run very fast when danger is near!" She told me that this glass had been my mother's when she was small. Grandma said that it was mom's favorite and now it was mine whenever I came out to visit. The cookies tasted especially delicious that night, and the milk became the nectar of the gods as I suckled out of my very special glass.

The next morning, when my folks came to pick me up, I cried at having to leave so very soon. It had hardly been any time at all, I thought, since they had dropped me off. My tears were of anger and frustration as I wanted to stay with my grandmother. My grandmother bent down to wipe away my tears and told me that she and my glass would be waiting for my return, and to hurry back. Then she handed me a small paper sack filled with cookies, gave me a kiss, and in words that were spoken with her eyes, told me she loved me.

# The Couch

by Diane Ramey

Melanie didn't like men, didn't trust them. Thirty-five years of knowing her father had honed her distrust. But she had been in therapy with a man, Dr. John Elliot Robertson, for over a year. She called him Dr. Robertson; he called her Ms. Hoskins. Very professional. She'd heard the other therapists called him John.

She couldn't call him John. She couldn't even look at him most of the time. If she did, she might decide to trust him. Besides, if she let him see her eyes, he might see something she didn't want to reveal.

It hadn't been Melanie's idea to see a man. Her previous therapist, a female, had recommended it. Maybe she shouldn't trust women either.

She sat in his waiting room now, heard the front door open and remembered a session last February, eleven months ago.

"Your office... There's something wrong. It worries me."

"My office worries you. How come? What worries you about it?"

"It doesn't look like it belongs to you. There are hardly any books on the shelves. Only one picture on the wall the whole thing looks generic. Temporary. Why should I tell you all my troubles if you're not sticking around?"

Their voices were often lost in the empty spaces of the room. "I mean, I know you're new here at this agency, but it feels like you could pull out any day."

"Like I might abandon you?"

The following week he came through the front door carrying a lush palm that was nearly as tall as himself. "Just bringing in some plants," he'd said.

Her stomach tightened. What if I ask for new paint on the walls, will he do that too? How about new drapes! And chairs? The straight-backed

upholstered institutional chairs are so uncomfortable.

She sat in the uncomfortable chair twirling a curl of her short blonde hair and pumped her crossed leg up and down. She asked him about the plant and he responded, "Why do you think I brought in a plant? What's your thought about my bringing in the plants?" He was tiresome. And irritating.

Over the next several weeks she didn't comment on the two new book shelves, soon filled with books, or the added plants, one on either side of the desk. She pretended to ignore it when he hung a Van Gogh print on the wall.

Her thoughts traveled a meandering road that often doubled back on itself. He really hears me! He responds to the things I say.

Sure.

He is only manipulating. Doing his job. He can't shrink you if you don't trust him. This voice sounded more familiar, more sturdy than the one excited by his responses.

She sat outside his office for her third appointment of the week, waiting for the previous patient to exit. Maybe today Dr. Robertson would tell her he was tired of the struggle. "I'm referring you to another therapist. You don't trust me and I see no point in dragging this out any further," he'd say.

But the previous patient emerged from a different door, followed soon after by Dr. Robertson. His slender impeccably dressed frame glided briskly toward her.

"My office is being painted so we'll use a different one."

Only a part of Melanie noticed this office had soft comfortable upholstered easy chairs. She wasn't serious when she suggested, "We ought to trade chairs with the occupant of this office." As usual, he made no comment but sat across from her placidly, his ankle at his knee.

At her next session he spoke to her as she rose to enter his office. "Things are changed around a little bit." He'd never said more than, "Hello, come on in," while outside the office before. She was prepared for something but not this. There was a couch in his office. The uncomfortable chairs she had complained about were gone.

Melanie walked across the room. "A couch!" She kept her voice casually surprised but couldn't stop the smile from breaking through and taking





over her face. She turned her head to look at Dr. Robertson. The room brightened with his smile and a warmth spread through her that she hadn't felt before.

"What is happening? What are you thinking?" he asked. The words came out slowly and softly as though he must hold his breath or he would laugh aloud and join in her surprise and pleasure instead of remaining professional and uninvolved.

"What do you mean, what's happening!?" she asked. But he did not elaborate.

Her eyes darted about as she searched for an answer. The room gently vibrated. He seems happy, she thought, as though he's bought me the birthday present I've always wanted.

"You didn't do this because I complained, did you?"

"What's your thought about why?"

"You drive me crazy with that phrase!"

He was silent again with the assurance born of the irritation of many patients who did not at first like what was good for them but made progress anyway.

"I know you didn't do this just for me, but it feels like you did. You acted really happy about my surprise." She paused. "Other people must have complained too. That's it. Others complained. The chairs were uncomfortable. So you replaced them. It's just that simple."

She sat tensely on the couch, her feelings tumbling inside her as if they were gymnasts clutched together to form a wheel, rolling over and over. Negative thought, positive thought, first one on top, then the other. He seems happy I'm pleased.

Of course he's happy. He needs you to trust him so that he can do his job. He's a shrink and shrinks can't shrink without trust.

But it feels so good that something I said made an impact on a person. He heard me!

Of course he heard you. That's his job.

He finally admitted what she'd said was true. "You're right. Many patients complained about the chairs being uncomfortable, and the couch became available so..."

But the birthday present feeling wouldn't go away.

At the end of the session he stretched releasing the tension of the hour, his arms reaching up, then down to his toes as he sat in his chair.

He looked up at her and smiled. There was a

moment of pure, pristine clarity. She smiled back at him. Then the icy chill of fear reached inside her and she looked away.

Every session after that, immediately upon entering his office she looked for her couch. If it was there, she was safe.

The couch itself was unremarkable. A plain brown couch. The same color as her father's chair. The one he sat in with Melanie on his lap. The one in her basement, broken down now after thirty years.

Slowly, over the next few months Dr. Robertson's office changed. Soft champagne carpeting was installed. His chair was replaced by two new ones, caramel-colored leather.

She felt more kindly toward Dr. Robertson than before the advent of the couch, but he was still a man.

"What do you find yourself thinking?" he asked in one of her many silent moments.

"I don't know," she answered, knowing but not wanting to reveal her thoughts.

"You don't tell me things," he complained, his voice accenting the 'tell' and rising on 'things' as if to say, "How can I help you if you won't cooperate?"

She thought of all the very difficult things she had told him and was upset that he did not appreciate her effort.

She warned him the day the new chairs arrived. "If this couch is gone, I'll be upset," she said. "It's important to me." He had heard her before and he would hear her again.

She sat in the waiting room and thought about the dream she had talked about last week; they had not finished interpreting it. She looked up as he opened his office door, smiled and said, "Come on back." She rose and walked inside. The couch wasn't there.

A new couch was ensconced in the space where her couch had been. It was beautiful, the same leather as the two new chairs. Its large billowing cushions invited her to relax into them, to rest there. But she did not feel invited. The muscles in her legs strained to stop even as they moved forward. A hole opened in her chest exposing her delicate interior to harsh cold air.

She sat on the couch though her mind screamed, "I don't want to sit on it!" She felt her skin wrap itself more tightly to her bones to avoid touching this betrayal.

She sat with one arm cradling her middle, the other held stiffly with her hand under her chin. She



tried to hold her mind still, keep it from spinning out on this slippery emotional pavement. "I want to talk about the dream I had last week. We never finished interpreting it."

She sensed his head move slightly to the side and his brows knit with curiosity. He said softly, "Why do you want to talk about the dream instead of what is happening right now?"

"There is nothing happening. And we haven't finished the dream."

"What do you mean, there is nothing happening?"

She hesitated, took a breath and opened her mouth to speak, then closed it again. He knows how I feel.

Finally she blurted, "You have a new couch."

"Um hm." He waited.

"I told you two weeks ago if the couch was not here, I would be upset. I am upset!"

"What is upsetting about that?"

"What is upsetting about that!" She looked up at him, her mouth open, her eyebrows raised. She sat in the same rigid position moving her hand only to cover her now closed mouth, then move it back to her chin. She couldn't talk.

"What is upsetting about that?" he repeated.

Again she opened her mouth, took a breath to speak, but nothing came out. She shook her head and looked back at her knees.

"Why did you do this? Why did you do this?" Her voice rose. Her mind raced while she sat huddled on this new couch. He knew all along I would be upset. He finds out what is important to me and pulls it away. Then sits back to watch me squirm like a bug on a stick. I knew it was too good to be true.

"Do what? What did I do?" He sounded irritated. "I told you two weeks ago the couch was important. You should have let me know you were getting a new one."

"I'm not following you."

"You should have let me know," she said through clenched teeth.

"Why should I have let you know?" the words were said in the same way he might have said, "What's the big deal?"

Her jaw was tight as she spit out, "I'm not talking. I am not talking!"

He raised himself on his elbows and shifted in his chair. He said simply, "Why?"

"Because you are not hearing me."

He softened as he gently asked, "Tell me what I'm not hearing."

She glanced up at him. His eyes were on her as though staring hard enough would make him understand.

"Things are important. More important than people. Things last a long time. There is furniture in museums that is two hundred years old. The people who made it and used it are gone, but the furniture is still there.

"You gave me that couch. I mean, I know you didn't give it just to me, but it felt like you gave it to me. You knew I would like the couch. You could hardly keep from laughing aloud with me when I saw it in your office that day. Now it's gone."

They were both silent.

Doubts crept in. But it was only a couch. Just an inanimate object. He did actually bring it in. He did almost laugh with me. He did smile at me warmly at the end of the session. The couch's absence does not change that.

She took a deep breath, drawing strength from the air in her lungs. But I told him it was important! She looked up at him. "Why didn't you tell me you were getting rid of it?" She paused, allowing the lump in her throat to subside then looked at him and repeated, "Why didn't you tell me?"

He looked at her a moment before answering. His elbow was on the arm of the chair, his head resting on his chin. "I didn't know it would be important to you. I remember now, you talked about it, but it was mixed in with other thoughts and didn't seem as important as it does now."

Relief flooded through her like a spring rain washing away the refuse of winter. He didn't know. He wasn't watching her squirm.

She felt her body relax letting her feel this new couch. The cushions, warmed by her touch, held her gently. Her head rested on the soft high back and instead of always staring at her knees, she was looking up. She placed her arm on its smooth caramel-colored leather arm and felt the support it offered.

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# Dealing with Things

by Diane Ramey

"Hit 'em! Hit 'em!" Marsha screamed at the men crashing into the boards, each intent on the small black disk. Arms, legs and sticks scrambled. The ref's whistle blew signaling a face off and all the players backed away except two. A Blazer, from Marsha's team and a Clipper. The sticks dropped, gloves came off and fists pummeled.

Marsha's adrenalin flowed as she stood, bouncing up and down on her seat. Her dark brown hair, parted in the middle, swung down her back. She stood just twenty feet away from the action in the seats close to the ice. Her round gentle face watched intently.

The Blazer's fist crashed into the cheek of the Clipper. Her own fists clenched as her elbow led her arm up to take a swing. Her movement was tight and restrained. After the first blows, the two players locked together while the referee tried to break them apart.

"Keep your stick down, jerk!" she yelled to the opposing team. "Then you won't get hurt."

She joined the rest of the crowd in their chorus of boos when the penalties were announced. "The idiot was high sticking. Where's his penalty for that?"

She put her hands in her pockets against the chill and shifted on her chair to view the face-off. There were three rows of folding chairs separated from the ice by the boards topped by transparent plastic panels. As most fans in this section of the arena, she stood on the red chair.

It was a dangerous place to stand. But it was the most exciting spot. Last weekend a puck had flown over the plastic, bounced off a brick behind her head and landed on the gray wooden floor two rows below her.

From this spot she could see the faces of the players, their grimaces, hear the muffled clink and swish of the skates on the ice and the grunts as they crashed into the boards and each other. Here she was part of the game. Only at a hockey game did Marsha do something dangerous. In everything else she played it safe and conservative, never making waves.

She breathed the cold air of the arena, its exhilarating briskness brushing her nose and cheeks as she smelled the ice, the popcorn and the sweat. The game started again and the skaters sped past her, stirring up a breeze as they went. A Blazer with the puck behind the net looked for someone to pass to.

The center stood in front of the net, the opposing defenseman behind him dancing right and left, elbows and stick threatening, poking, prodding.

Marsha's body moved with them. Her arms tensed as the puck came out front, and she swung her illusory stick and scored. When the defenseman caught the puck and raced back down the ice away from his goalie, she stomped her foot, shaking the chair. Her team lost by one goal.

Her little black Escort made its way slowly out of the crowded parking lot. The back window was



decorated with a hockey stick, a helmet, puck and two caps all with her team insignia. The caps were arranged, one on either side of the window, flanking the helmet placed prominently in the middle. The stick rested diagonally with the puck in the curve announcing to all who glanced her way that hockey and the Blazers were important to the driver of this vehicle.

With one hand on the wheel, the other punctuating her angry diatribe, she drove home after the game. "Too many bad calls. The turkeys are blind. Blind as bats. Striped bats. Turkey bats!"

Don's car wasn't in the driveway. She glanced at her watch. It was only ten-thirty. He worked the three to eleven shift on the assembly line at the auto plant. That meant at least an hour before he came in.

The babysitter accepted her fee, and Marsha watched her walk across the street to her own home. Then she turned back to the livingroom. Her forehead creased in an angry frown, creases that would one day deepen into permanent lines. Now, her skin bounced back again and smoothed out as she picked up an armful of toys and distributed them to her children's rooms. They never put away their toys when a babysitter was there. She knew she should get after them.

Terry was sprawled on his bed. His Teddy bear, the one he insisted he no longer needed, clutched in one hand. He was seven years old and proud of his new found maturity. Marsha looked at his sweet face, his blonde hair falling on the pillow. "I'd never know you had such a smart mouth looking at you now," she whispered. He stirred and she covered him.

She stumbled on some Legos left on the floor in her daughter Sherry Lynn's room, stifled a curse, held her stockinged foot, squeezing it to still the pain. Sherry Lynn had celebrated her third birthday last Saturday. The Legos were a gift from Marsha's brother Michael.

Sherry Lynn had the same dark brown hair as her mother. A strand of it lay damply across the little girl's mouth. She sucked her thumb and her hair. Marsha took encouragement from the dentist who said it would be two more years before the thumb sucking would begin to do damage. Until then Sherry could have her thumb.

Marsha stumbled to her own room for shoes. No sense losing the battle to a Lego twice in one night. In the kitchen she ran water in the dishpan and washed, the dinner dishes wishing she'd asked the sitter to do them. The floor needed mopping, but she knew she only had enough energy for a good sweep.

She sat at the table, her head in one hand, a pencil in the other poised over a book of crossword puzzles. In the middle of her second puzzle the phone rang.

"Hi, honey. It's me."

"Don't tell me I know. You're not coming home."

She tried to keep the hurt and anger from her voice.

"One of the guys is leaving and we're going to treat him to a few beers. I won't be late. Maybe an hour."

"Yeah, sure. I'll see you." She let the phone drop hard onto the hook. Don wasn't usually very late. Just late enough so she couldn't wait up for him. She had to be up by six. The office where she worked part-time didn't open until nine, but it took three hours to get ready and the kids to their schools.

In the bedroom, she hurried out of her jeans and sweater and into a flannel nightgown. Crawling between the chilly sheets, she lay on her side her body hunched, her legs pulled up close to her, tensing to create warmth as quickly as possible. She pulled Don's cold pillow from its place next to hers and laid it in front of her where she hugged it to her.

She forced herself to think of something besides the cold and settled on the fight at the hockey game tonight. She felt her anger build as she saw her Blazer's fists flying at the Clipper's chin. She forgot the cold.

"Where are the hard copies? They're not in the file. What did you do with them!" The noise of the impact wrencher screamed through the closed doors to the shop while the exhaust fumes seeped under. In the parts department next door, a loud clank penetrated the office as pipes and a muffler were tossed onto the counter.

"I'll look for them in a minute, Stan. I have to get this account straightened out for Mr. Thomas." The phone rang and her cadence changed to a business-like lilt, "Thomas Auto Sales, may I help you? One

moment please." She punched the buttons on the telephone.

"I haven't got a moment, Marsha. The customer is here complaining now. I need them now." The wrench screamed louder as someone walked through the shop door.

"Yes, Stan. I'll get them right away. On the double."

"Marsha?" the intercom on her desk inquired irritably. "Do you have that account yet? I've got the lady on the phone."

"I'm working on it right now, Mr. Thomas. I shouldn't be much longer." She reached across the counter.

"Here's your change, sir. I'll do it right now, Stan."

"What?" the intercom barked. "Marsha, I don't want change. Is Stan there? Send him in to my office right away."

"Yes, Mr. Thomas."

On her lunch hour, she sat in the cramped staff room furiously chewing on crunchy raw carrots. She opened her purse and counted the bills. Not enough. She dug into the bottom of her purse and scraped up the additional change she needed for admission to tonight's hockey game.

"What are you digging for, gold?" Maggie's sharp nasal tone sounded in the small room.

"No. Just enough money to get me to the hockey game tonight."

"You go to those things all the time don't you? You spend a lot of money at that place!"

Oh, for the nerve to answer her. At least I don't spend it on paint for my face. You look like an art gallery from the neck up.

"It's my only entertainment," she said.

"Seems to me a nice bubble bath or a good book would be cheaper."

"Maybe so, Maggie." But not as much fun.

She sat thinking of her kids, throwing in "uh huh's" and oh really's during the pauses as Maggie blatted on. Don would be getting them lunch about now. Would he remember to give Sherry Lynn her asthma medicine? Would Terry eat fast enough to get back to school on time? Don always let him dawdle in front of the T.V.

She came to when she realized Maggie was looking at her expectantly. "Oh, really?" she said quickly.

"What do you mean, oh, really? I asked if your brother was getting in trouble still, or is he keeping his nose clean?"

"He does fine, Maggie." She rose and opened the door leading back to the office. The noise of the shop was picking up again. The sharp whir of a drill penetrated her ears.

"Hey doll. I found those hard copies," she heard as she walked back to the office. "They were at the service desk under some other files."

"That's good, Stan. That's really good. I'm glad you found them." Her voice was flat as she turned away from Stan frowning. The drill continued its high pitched sound.

Marsha felt her excitement build as she sat waiting for her car to warm up. She glanced behind her at the hockey stick in the back window, saw the red helmet in the middle. She rubbed her palms together in anticipation of tonight's game.

She picked the kids up at the sitter and drove home to the cacophony of their voices bickering in the back seat. She switched off the sound and drifted into a picture of last night's game, the jabbing elbows, kicking feet, and flying sticks. They poked, stabbed, and swung to get the puck. She clutched the steering wheel harder when she thought of the fight. One fist clenched and bounced up and down on the wheel. She felt righteous indignation at the wrongs done to her team.

"Mommie!" Sherry Lynn wailed from the back seat. "Terry, pulled my hair!"

"You took my truck," he screamed back.

"I did not."

Marsha's shoulders drooped as she sighed. "Please, kids. Don't fight." Her voice sounded as whiney as the kids. She moved her purse and its kitty of hockey money closer to her on the front seat. I've got to get better at dealing with things, she thought.

Don called at his seven o'clock break. "I promise I'll be home at eleven-fifteen tonight," he said.



"It's okay, honey," she assured him. She tossed the receiver briskly at the hook and wondered why those words came out when what she wanted to say was, "You damn well better be home at eleven-fifteen."

The phone jangled again before she was two steps away. "Hi, Marsha, it's me, Mike." She braced herself, her stomach quivering along with her resolve.

"What's up, little brother?"

"I need some money. The cops busted me again. Can you bail me out?"

"Ah, Mike!" She'd made up her mind not to give him anymore money.

"Marsha, I've called everybody else. You're my sister. You've got to help me."

"Mike, I know I'm your sister. But I don't have the money. How did you get in this fix again? You promised last time you would straighten out."

His litany of excuses was long. The boss had it in for him. His girlfriend was cheating on him. He was double crossed by the guy who turned him in. A picture of Mike at age seven flashed into her mind, his pouty little face looking so much like Terry's today.

"But Mike...." She knew she was losing it.

"There isn't anybody else I can go to, Marsha."

She sighed.

"I didn't think you, of all people, would let me down."

"You really know how to throw the guilt around don't you." She paused. "I'll try, Mike. I don't know how. But I'll try."

She turned from the phone and cleared the table of its burden of dirty dishes. She was unaware of the harsh clanking of the dishes until Terry appeared at her elbow looking at her warily.

"Are you mad about something, Mom?" he asked.

"No," she answered thinking, 'I'll figure out something after the game tonight.'

She stood on her usual chair her body tense, her fist clenched. The brisk cold air covered her face. The teams were preparing for a face-off and she had a moment to think. She remembered tucking Terry into bed before she left for the game. He buried his face in the warm fleecy collar of her rawhide coat.

"Why do you go to hockey games, Mom?" he asked.

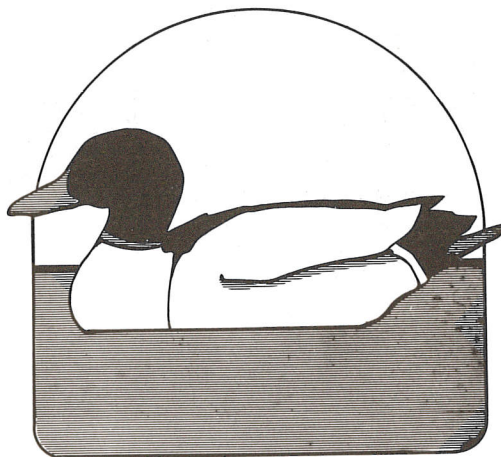
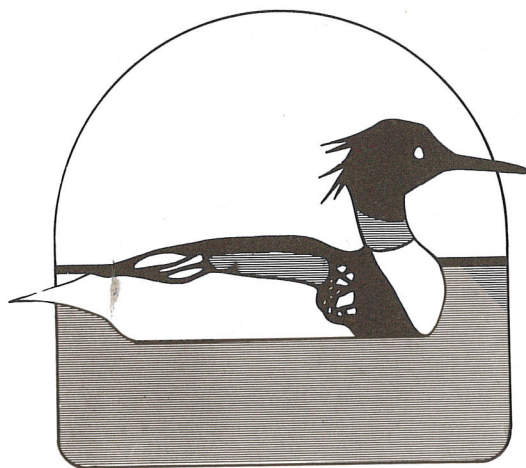
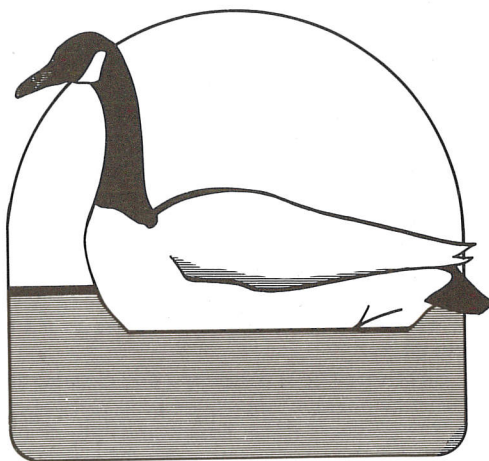
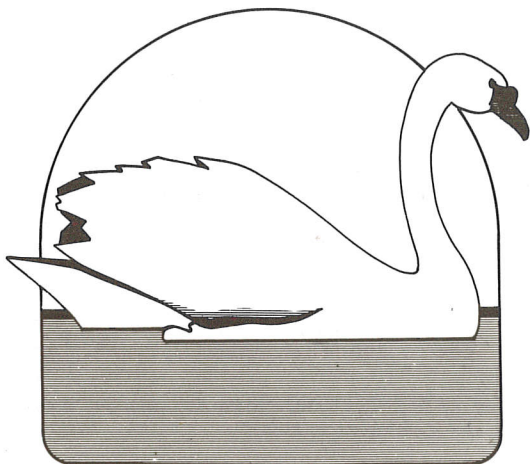
"I don't know, Terry. It makes me feel good." She felt sad and didn't know why.

The action on the ice picked up and she turned her attention back to the game. The Blazers were ahead by one goal, and the Hawks had a man in the penalty box. A Blazer broke away and was skating alone with the puck toward the opposing goal.

"Go, go!" Marsha screamed straining toward the net at the end of the rink. She jumped up and down, waving her arms. The goalie skated out to meet the Blazer as he swung at the puck. It hit the goalie's pad and caromed toward the net hitting the post and bounding away.

Disappointment engulfed her. She flung her arms down in disbelief and anger. Her attention was caught by tight movement directly in front of her and the ref's whistle. Two players had dropped their gloves. She turned to see a Blazer arm crashing over and over into a Hawk's chest. Then the Hawk fist slammed into flesh making a harsh smacking sound.

She raised her fist and shouted, "Hit'em again, Blazers. Don't take that! Hit'em, hit'em!"





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# BOMB

by Edward Romero

The "New Age" sounds of Shadowfax hummed flawlessly over the speakers of the five grand Sony entertainment center. The sound filled the clean, spacious apartment with a sense of tranquility. Across the glossy tile floor, past the framed reprints of Nagel works hanging on the pale white walls, beyond the blinking answering machine sitting on an end table next to the phone, away from the soft art-deco furniture of the living room, stood a large, glass topped desk. Jason Adler leaned forward at the desk and pushed his wire rimmed glasses back on his nose. The desk top was strewn with objects which seemed quite out of place; an old wind-up alarm clock, wire cutters, electrical tape, the shell of a camera body, a putty substance that smelled like gasoline and an air line ticket marked "WEST-AM, We fly for a Living." Jason lifted the putty from its place and moved it closer. Then, with great patience, he pushed two small blasting caps into it one by one.

"Christ, was I supposed to connect the wires before or after inserting the caps?" he mumbled to himself. "I wish these instructions were written by someone with a college education."

He quickly fumbled through the pages of NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH; A REAL MAN'S GUIDE TO CRIME FIGHTING. He had purchased the book a week earlier at the quarterly "Rambo and War Relics" convention held at Cobo Hall. After a few seconds he found the page he was looking for Chapter Seven: "Bombs and Babes-How You Can Get Both;" and let out a sigh of relief.

"Okay, what's next?" he said, exhausting his breath while running his hand back through his hair.

Jason then began cutting wires, twisting them together and wrapping them in electrical tape. This one here, that one there; it was a simple matter of connecting the proper

positive lead to the negative receiver and vice-versa. The entire process took about ten minutes. When finished with the connections, he molded the putty into the waiting shell of the camera body, modified with a hole at the base to run the wires from. This was then positioned next to the alarm clock and both were taped in place inside a black briefcase. He then began adding what NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH called "distraction articles." These included a wrist watch, a portable steamer several packs of film, a book, two magazines and a desk top calculator.

"As many times as I've flown this route, I'd be surprised if they even look at the X-ray," he said with some disgust. He had in fact, accumulated enough "frequent flyer" miles to fly just about anywhere in the world for free. However, he knew where he was going, and there would be no connecting flights. After all West-Am didn't book flights from Hell.

Closing the case, he stood up and backed away from the desk, snatching his Christian Dior sports coat from the back of the chair. Turning on his heel, he proceeded across the room, scuffing the floor as he shuffled his feet. When he thought he was a safe distance from the briefcase, his hand groped the inner pocket of the jacket until it found the pack of clove cigarettes and Zippo lighter. Sliding one of the thin, brown sticks from the package with his lips, he sparked the Zippo, inhaled and blew the smoke through his nose.

"Kristen used to hate these things," he said, glancing down at cigarette between his fingers.

"To Hell with her. To Hell with it all. I gave her everything she wanted, which was mostly money. And when I needed her most, she was already packed and gone. Damn her. Damn the airline. How could they afford not to sell? I thought I had a reliable source of information.



It was a sure thing. How could I have been so stupid? Daddy always told me 'Never bet it all on one horse, cause even a sure thing can turn sour in the last leg of the race.' Yeah Dad, you were a real Einstein; that's why Mom dumped you. Shit, I can't believe it's all gone."

Jason could imagine the headlines of tomorrow's Free Press: "Detroit Investment Banker Loses His Shirt on Wall Street: Takes It Out On West-Am." The story would tell of a young man who was too smart for his own good. It would say that fast money is foolish money and that inside trading is a quick ticket to prison. It would say that too much power and money can drive a young man mad. It would call him a white collar terrorist and probably run a special edition on greed and destruction. It would have his friends and family quoted as saying things like "We never

knew." Or, "He had such an honest face." And, of course, "I just can't believe it." Well, they'd better believe it, he thought. They'd better believe all of it.

Entering into the bedroom, his eyes immediately fell to the 8x10 glossy of an attractive young woman framed next to his bed. As he stared at the photo, he was reminded of why he kept it there. It was silly he thought, but for the past two weeks, he would sit on the edge of the bed and stare into her Kodak color eyes and pretend she was there.

"It's useless," he sighed. "It's f\*cking useless."

He reached forward and grabbed the ghost-frame, hurling it across the room. The glass shattered, leaving shards of his heart on the floor. Enough, he thought; he had work to do in the morning and needed rest. He kicked off



his shoes and fell back on the bed. Exhausted, he was asleep in minutes, but his unconscious wrestled the entire night.

The alarm went off at 7:30 a.m. Jason awoke with a sense of renewed vigor and enthusiasm. He sprang from the bed like a child on Christmas morning. Christmas was in fact only three days away, and he knew traffic to Detroit Metro was going to be backed up for miles. He would have to leave early. He was out of his old clothes, into the shower, out of the shower and into fresh clothes in a matter of fifteen minutes. He chose his best suit for the occasion, a black, double breasted number by some designer whose name he could never pronounce.

By 8:00 he was on the highway heading for the airport. The engine of the black on black Corvette hummed under the anxious maneuvering of the driver. There was a cold drizzle of rain striking the windshield as the car sped through dangerously heavy traffic. By 8:30, Jason had brought the car to a halt in one of the parking spaces close to the elevator marked for Handicapped only. He smirked at the thought of getting a parking ticket.

"Yeah, you can bill me."

Turning to the right, he opened the briefcase and inspected the bomb one last time. Everything was in place. The alarm clock was set for 9:15 and was ticking in time to the beat of his heart, which he could feel in his throat. He quickly closed the case and glanced over his shoulder, all clear. Pulling off his rain coat, he tossed it on the floor and stepped out of the car. Leaning back into the car, he snatched up the briefcase and closed the door, leaving the keys in the ignition.

"Well, good-bye old buddy. At least you were with me till the end." He patted the car on the hood affectionately.

As if in answer to his praise, the front left tire let out a loud hiss and the car sagged. Broken glass could be seen scattered around the front of the car.

"Shit, well the same to you." He kicked the door leaving a small dent and headed toward the elevator.

Upon entering the terminal, sweat began to accumulate under Jason's arms and around his neck. He had plenty of time to make his 9:00 flight to New York and was trying to look casual without looking like he was trying to look casual. It wasn't working, but no one had time to notice him or anyone else. There were soldiers in uniform carrying huge duffle bags, mothers with multiples of children trying to keep them in line, lovers embracing,

businessmen scurrying off to business meetings and countless others who had better things to do than to spot a man with a bomb. Even the security officer at the gate was too busy complaining about the weather and the previous night's sports happenings to notice anything unusual about Mr. Adler. The distracton articles must have worked, he assumed. Occasionally a passing bagboy or flight attendant would recognize him and comment "Why Mr. Adler, you look a bit under the weather," and keep about his business.

Once inside the plane, a flight attendant asked if she could take his briefcase and store it in the overhead luggage rack.

"No thanks, I think I'll hold on to it," he said with a smile. "There's some work in it that needs to be done."

Jason had been planning this for weeks and as the plane began to taxi down the runway, he knew the time was near. Suicide would have been too easy. He wanted to go out with a bang. He would make this company pay for all of the harm they had caused him. Extreme situations call for extreme action, he thought to himself, glancing at his watch. It was 9:13, time to die.

In her apartment, Kristen was mulling about the kitchen looking for something she didn't have to cook for breakfast. The radio was playing a song by Shadowfax; and she turned the dial to avoid any unpleasant memories. She stopped on the next station as Milli Vanilli was coming to a close.

"God, I hate that song," she said pulling down a box of Oat Bran Deluxe.

As the song ended the news began: "Our top story this morning; WEST-AM passengers on flight 236 to New York were thrown into a panic as a small bomb exploded in the first class section of the plane. The bomb completely destroyed a leather briefcase, scattering scraps of paper and camera parts everywhere. Fortunately, no one was hurt except for the suspected terrorist, a young investment banker named Jason Adler. Adler received minor shrapnel damage from the flying debris, and was taken to the River District Hospital for treatment. It's 9:32 a.m. More news after this."

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# "ORDERS"

by Kathleen McConnell

They lay together, her head resting on his arm in heavy silence. The bedside lamp cast a narrow circle of light above them and onto the dark mahogany step table on which it stood. The cheaply paneled room was furnished sparingly with a mishmash of "early attic" pieces, as summer homes are furnished. It was a comfortable room, and smelled faintly of the insect spray Steve's mother lavished on the baseboards





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every spring and fall. The baby in his portable crib slept beside their bed, while in the living room, just beyond the soft hiss of the gas heater, purred a lullaby. Every so often slushy waves lapped against the frost-hardened beach outside, or a gust of wind would rattle through the pines, shoving the dried leaves in eddying pools against the house. Otherwise there was the stillness that comes during late autumn nights when the summer people have left and the steady heartbeat of cricket calls has ceased altogether.

They had never stayed at the cottage this late in the year before; but Steve's father had postponed his ritual winterizing of the family summer place so that she and Steve could spend their last weekend together with the comfort of water and plumbing. "Dad" knew they loved it here, with the memories of summer mornings wakening to the aroma of coffee and bacon, lazy breakfasts on Steve's mother's "sun porch" overlooking the water, evenings in front of the fire, the whole place bathed in the smell of hickory smoke. This was the best place to spend the last few days before Steve left; better than the cold impersonal apartment on the army base. Steve, Monica and the baby had moved there from their last post only a month before and Monica hadn't had the time, money, or, if the truth were told, the desire, to make it into the comfortable place they could call home.

It wouldn't be home, she knew without Steve there. She'd miss his boyish exuberance with the baby, his ready laugh, his thoughtfulness and tenderness. In a few short days he'd be gone, two thousand miles away to a place she'd never see, fighting a war neither of them understood, with twelve months of separation stretching before them.

It struck her now, with her little family alone, in the dark of night, in this desolate place, that the idea she'd barely dared to acknowledge during the past few weeks since Steve received his orders, might work. A buoyant certainty that it could be done filled her with excitement as she formulated the plan. They could escape! They could run away, the three of them, to someplace they wouldn't be found, someplace safe from the heinous intrusion on their life that Steve's orders had become. She wouldn't have to raise the baby by herself, or worry about paying the bills, or face the dark nights alone. Steve would be safe, with her and their baby, and that's all she needed. She'd have to say it out loud though, say it to him, voice the thought she knew was traitorous in the eyes of her country. Without moving, staring into the circle of light on the ceiling as though it were her beacon, she spoke quickly and with determined singleness of purpose.

"We could go to Canada, Steve." He didn't reply. She continued undaunted.

"We could do it tonight, now! There's still time. No one's expecting us back until tomorrow; your flight doesn't leave until the next day--we could do it! Just take the baby and the clothes we have here and go!" The words spewed forth in a torrent, gathering momentum in an effort to convince Steve of their logic.

Steve didn't speak Monica waited a moment, then raising herself onto her elbow she looked at him. His eyes were closed, but sensing her gaze he opened them. She saw the tears glistening at their rims, tears that would never fall. She knew then that he'd thought about it too, however briefly, and rejected it fully.

"I couldn't do it, Monica. I couldn't do it to us, to my family. I could never face my Dad if I did, if I ran away. We could never come back."

Monica laid back down. She stared at the ceiling. Never come back. That meant nothing to her. To never see her family again had no relevance in her young life; to live without her husband for a year, maybe forever, was something she'd risk anything to avoid. They can't take him away from me, from the baby! It wasn't fair. How could they do this, what right did they have to ask this of us? Her thoughts collided with each other, rationalizing her fear.

But she knew she had to face this thing; they had to face it. She knew it even as she fought a momentary anger that Steve could accept his orders, that he didn't have the nerve to take a step that was against his family's, his country's beliefs, even if it meant keeping his own little family together and possibly saving his own life. She recognized something in his voice, felt that steel wall of reserve that in later years she would

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feel only once or twice again, and she knew it was pointless to argue with him. He had made up his mind. To try to change it would be to try to change him, and even though she was young and impetuous and idealistic, she must have known instinctively that she wouldn't want to be able to change his mind. To change him.

"I'll be fine, Monica. We'll be fine. Nothing will happen to me over there. I know it." He gave her a tight hug and held her there, as if by holding each other so tightly they could shut out the certainty of what was to come and live the moment indefinitely.

Morning came, though, and they were occupied mind and body with the business of packing and closing up the cottage. The baby played quietly as they moved about from room to room packing, checking, locking. During the hour's drive back to the apartment, they talked of things that they had unconsciously saved for this moment, things easier said accompanied by the motion of the car, with the rush of passing scenery rustling on the edge of concentration and preventing them from becoming too close, too deep, too vulnerable; things that their young marriage had never explored, always taken for granted; things about love, trust, separation. We'd write, every day, they promised. We've been married so long - two years - we're luckier than others who hardly know each other before they have to separate. Oh, we'll be fine. Secure in their mutual ideals, their private concurrence, they could get through the next few days now: the family get-togethers and good-byes. The next few months, the next year, would take care of itself. They were uprightly, morally sure, the way only the innocent are sure.

The morning Steve was to leave dawned, steel and ice. His uniform was ready, pressed and starched as Monica had learned to do so well. She was aware that he dressed meticulously, mindlessly, with that maddening anticipatory energy that comes with the end of a long wait for an adventure. Yes, he had adventure ahead, however dangerous and dreaded. She, meanwhile, put on the dress Steve had bought for her, and dressed the baby, doing all the prosaic chores that would occupy her days and nights in the months ahead. Gathering Steve's luggage and the baby's things, they stopped a moment. Steve's hand on the door.

"Do we have everything?" he asked.

Over his shoulder, she surveyed the empty room: the cold block walls painted that regulation green; the bare tile floor with its cheap, nylon area rug; the hand-me-down furniture; the kitchenette sink filled with the breakfast dishes.

"I guess so, she said with a tired shrug toward the luggage. Steve closed the door, after checking that she had her keys. The baby gave an impatient little cry, wriggling in her arms as she rummaged in her shoulder bag to assure her husband that, yes, she had her keys. She had checked them twice earlier, but she gave Steve a smile of thanks and followed him down the steps, turning her back resolutely away from the apartment.

She'd do the dishes later; there'd be plenty of time.



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# “Robert”

by Anna Naruta

He laid on the counter with the confident air of a man who had been hit on the head with a regulation sized yo-yo 32 1/4 too many times. This was, however, an almost entirely inaccurate description, as Robert was neither confident nor a man and had never seen a regulation sized yo-yo in his life. He was in fact, a coiled roll of rather nicely manufactured minty green hygienic dental floss, which made it hard to exude a confident air.

But he wasn't upset with this drawback. Being a strand of waxed string gave him that warm glowing feeling that one can get only by helping people, and besides, the pay was good.

As Robert rested in the grey dusk of early twilight, staring at the fading ceiling, his thoughts turned to his work. He thought about all the times the Girl who lived there had come into the bathroom to brush Her teeth and, seeing the plastic container which encased him, remembered the lessons taught to Her as a child and vigorously flossed Her teeth.

He sighed and returned his thoughts to his surroundings. Although his vision was poor, and the room growing dimmer, he could still make out the features of the only place he had ever known. The familiar brown wallpaper with its monstrous baroque flowers clung to the wall with such strength it seemed that if it relaxed its hold the walls would come tumbling down around you. This, of course, was untrue, but the wallpaper wasn't going to take any chances.

The sink countertop was made of a material that had an inexplicable quality of

attracting innocent globs of toothpaste, where, once they had landed on the cold enameled surface, they were permanently cemented to it and were forced to lie helplessly for the untold numbers of millenia it would be until the universe self-destructed, hopefully taking the countertop with it.

The curtains were of that peculiar lace that can be found only in certain uptown furnished apartments where the landlord is looking for an excuse to raise the rent without actually doing anything to merit it, or in the back windows of all your more stylish taxi cabs.

The faucet of the sink had that gleaming look that comes from being scrubbed and promptly being touched with grimy hands so it had to be scrubbed again.

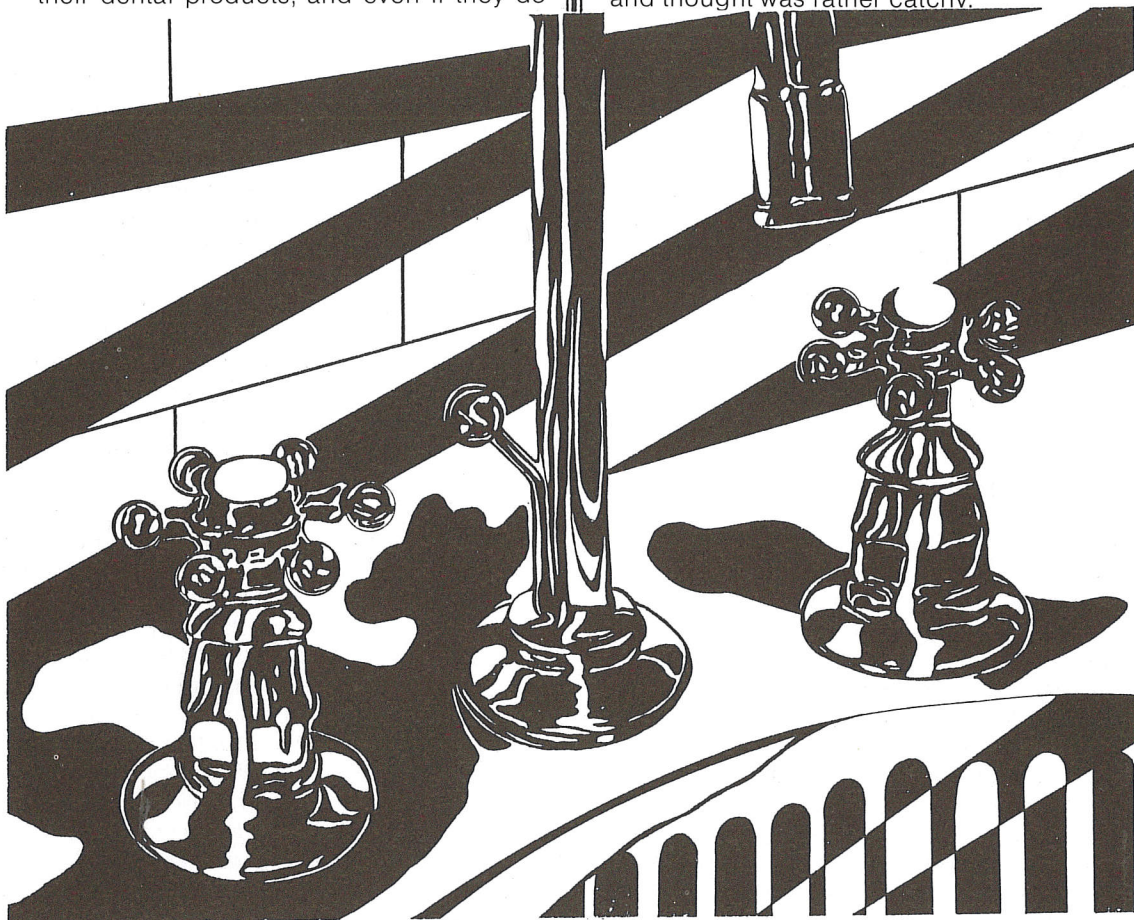
These items, plus the Girl, were what existed in Robert's world. He never knew about the window or the floor as they were beyond his range of vision, and he had never felt inclined to move about so that he could view other things. Robert never knew of the world of Santa traps and exercise bicycles and police badges and fine china and snopops and, had he known he wouldn't have cared anyway. He was content to lie on the counter, think dental flossy thoughts, and help remove plaque and trapped food particles from in between teeth. This ignorance of the outside world may account for his blissful existence.

His thoughts wandered to the Girl. He had to admit that his interest in Her was not just dental. When She wrapped him around Her fingers and used him to scrape along Her

teeth, it stirred something in that green-colored heart of his.

He didn't even know Her name. What he did know about Her he learned only by observing Her behavior, as many people do not take the time to introduce themselves to their dental products, and even if they do

When She made Her final morning appearance in the bathroom to check Her meticulously styled hair and smooth Her casual outfits, he would mentally say good-bye to Her and wish Her to "Have a nice day," a phrase which he had come up with himself and thought was rather catchy.



they usually do not spend long amounts of time conversing with their dental floss about where they were born, their interests, and what kind of day they've had. He knew from the bright melodies that She sang in the shower and the searching tunes She hummed as She brushed Her teeth what kind of person She was.

Robert fell asleep not thinking of traffic jams and dreamed the sort of things that only members of the dental floss species can understand.

He woke up and sat waiting for Her to come in and begin Her morning ritual. He could blearily see Her as She walked into the shower. He heard the water running down



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the drain as it warmed to the temperature that would create steam at the top of the room. Soon the rising and falling of Her voice could be heard as She sung the ballad that was known to the world as the most beautiful song in all creation, the Sex Pistol's "God Save the Queen." He could smell the apple fragrance of Her shampoo.

The water ceased to run and She stepped out of the shower and toweled off leaving to get dressed. Later he heard the sounds of what he rightly assumed to be breakfast and smelled the unique smell of bacon and peanut-butter in the final stages of cooking. (footnote: it might be added here that the combination of bacon and peanut butter would need only two medium sized dill pickles to reach critical mass and begin fusion.)

After this meal, She walked back down the hall to the bathroom to begin the practice that Robert loved so much. She picked up Her tooth brush, successfully aimed a glob of toothpaste at it, and with the circular motion that was taught to Her by a very patient dentist at a very early age scrubbed Her teeth.

Robert waited for Her to finish while listening to the Muzak-like drone of Her humming "Surfin' Safari." She finished and picked him up and cut off a good size piece of him. Wrapped gently around Her index fingers, She slid the minty twine between Her teeth and worked it down toward Her gum to dislodge a piece of bacon stuck there. Robert chuckled to himself, (it tickled) as he admired Her healthy teeth. Only one filling in the back marred the sign of good dental hygiene. He kept giggling, enjoying the feel of being free of his small container.

When She was done, She threw that piece of him away in the conveniently located wastebasket. But he didn't mind. He had served his purpose, and there was still plenty of him left.

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# THE EGG-SHAPED TREE

by Kathleen McConnell

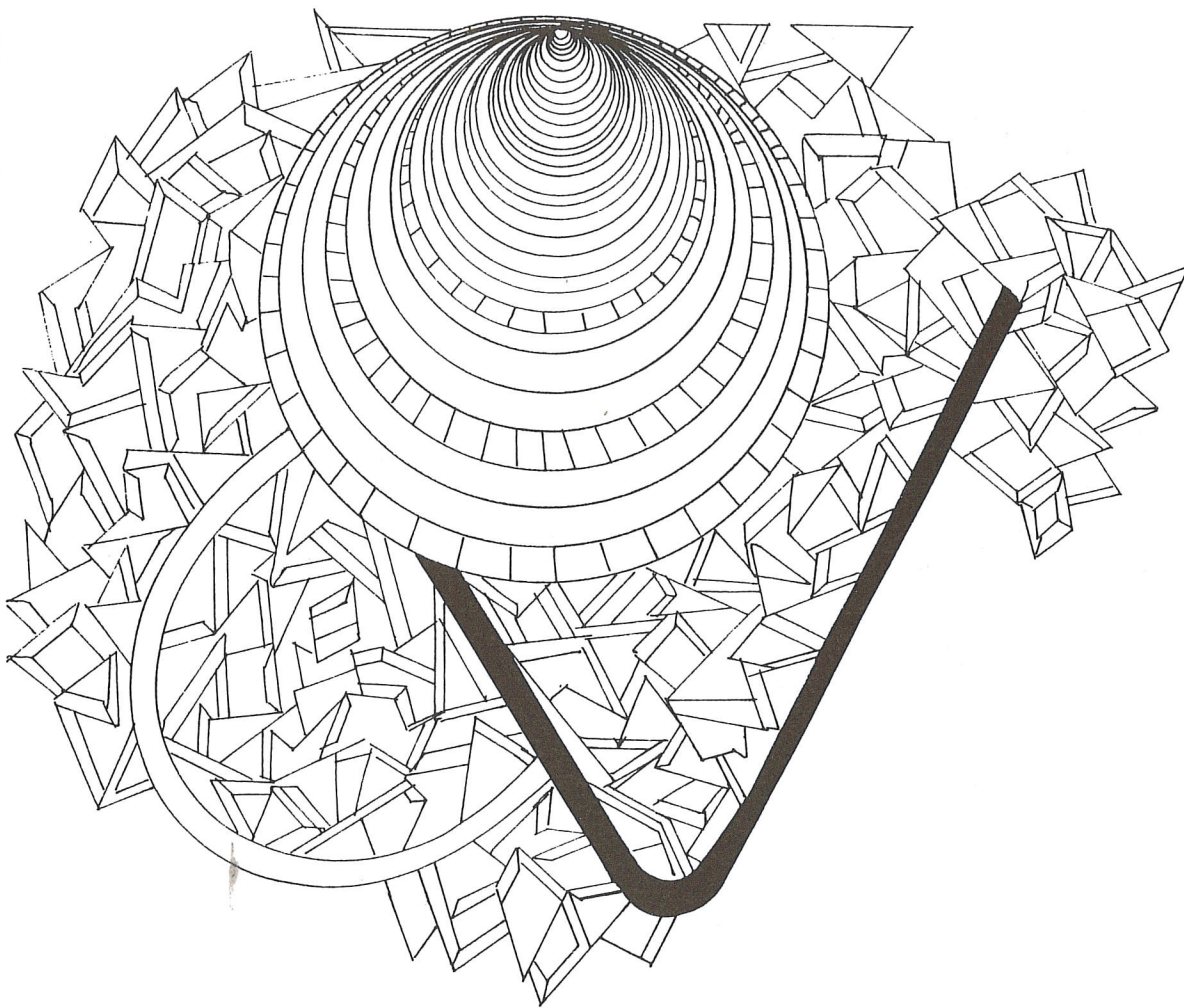
It was an oddly shaped lot, like a pentagon.  
At its furthest point stood  
the egg-shaped tree.  
You could see the faint outline of the oval  
Formed by the wisped tips of its branches,  
Marking the point where the property ended.

"See there, straight ahead, not the first line of trees  
But the next?" the sales agent had asked me.  
And I looked hard into the distance,  
My city eyes searching among the scrubby trees  
At the secondary line  
Until at last I found the tallest, the stately oval shape  
Standing almost unmoving in the gentle spring breeze.

I could always find that tree when I needed a marker,  
Something to define what I owned,  
What part of me was out there.  
But when I'd venture out on foot in the deep grass,  
Wanting to touch it, I could never be sure  
If I'd found the right one.

When the buyers came, years later,  
I'd point out into the distance  
In answer to their proprietary question.  
"See there, the second line of trees?" I'd say.  
"See the tall, egg-shaped tree?"  
(Oh, forgive me, tree for telling them!)  
And they would squint toward the north, impatient, nodding,  
Pretending they could differentiate  
Between the scrub trees and the slightly taller ones  
Deeper in the woods;  
Pretending to see that one, rare, perfect oval of a tree  
Marking their boundaries.





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# “Love in the Antique Boutique”

by Eric Halamka

As you draw your hand lithely over Louis XIV  
I surreptitiously spy you through the Venetian glass.  
Carefully examining lines and curves we check for flaws;  
one the dealer, one the voyeur.  
Is it authentic? Could it really have survived  
untouched over the years?  
Yes! Yes! Our hearts beating faster. Our heads  
swirling with the thrill of an incredible find.  
But your intense gaze detects an imperfection;  
by your demeanor I can tell it is serious.  
Apparently someone had broken it in two  
and almost successfully patched it up again.  
Dashed by its false advertisements, you,  
like me, are abashedly stunned.  
But it calling out, asking  
for what it never had the nerve to do earlier.  
It needs someone to love it despite the flaw  
just like you need me.

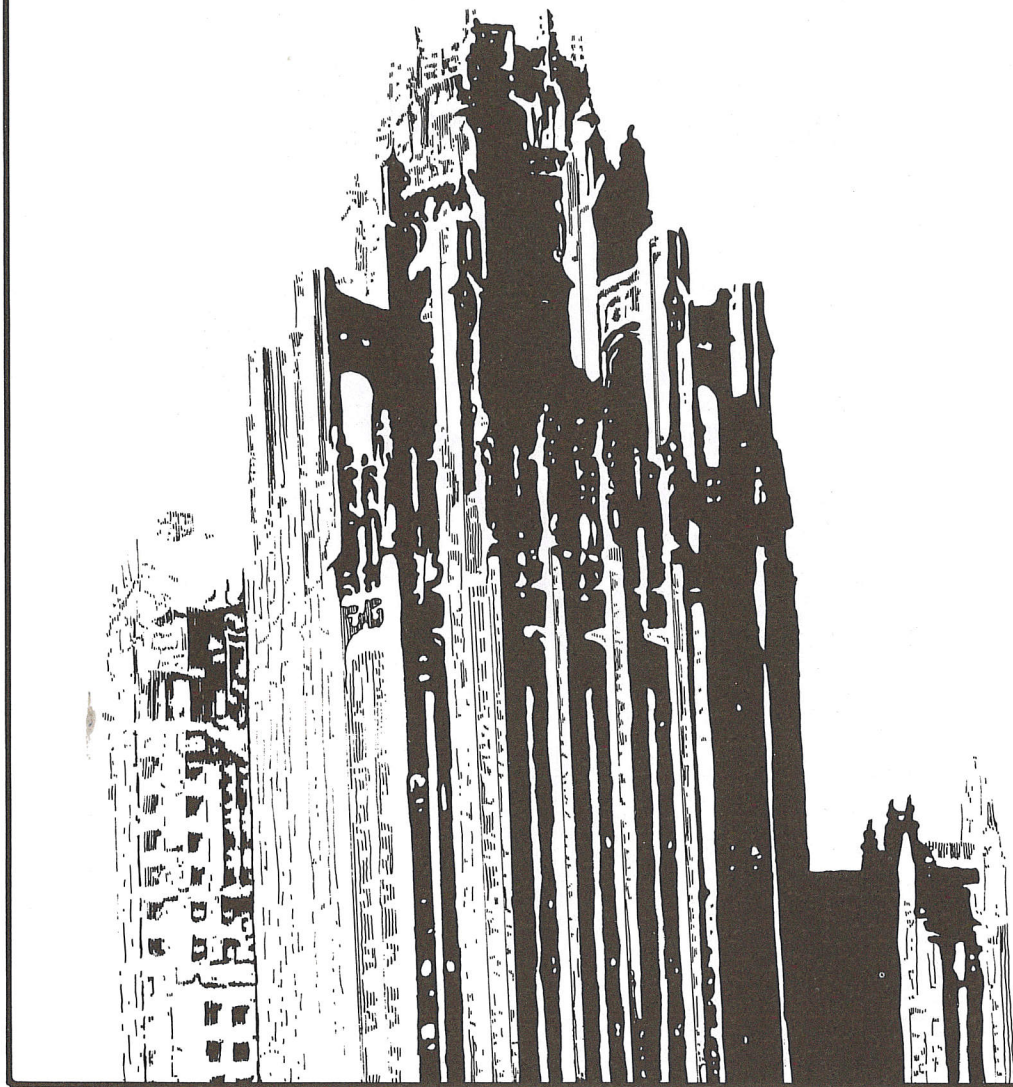




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# CHICAGO





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# WINTER SUNRISE

by K.C. Lazzari

It begins with a slow  
gradual fade.  
Metamorphosis.  
Black to cobalt -  
velvet to slate.  
Cuts easily the fragile fabric -  
bleeds down.





---

# A Breeze at Midnight

by Kathleen McConnell

I did not know this boy  
Who drank the cup of death so willingly,  
Relinquishing his essence  
To that false, seductive power;  
Not as an offering upon the polished altar  
Of a life well-lived,  
But futilely, with the scoffing denial of youth  
that one vagrant breeze can extinguish the flame.

His last party parades past my window,  
Rolling slowly, tiny flags flapping in the leaf-smoke breeze.  
Their sweet, collective, consuming sorrow  
Will pass with the coming days  
When the glamour of his fiery death will cast the truth in muted shadow:  
That chance was choice.  
Perhaps, though, the sharpness of my anonymous grief  
Will pierce their youthful acceptance of this waste.  
Perhaps, alone, they'll hear a breeze at midnight  
And shudder at its power.

---

# "I Saw the Dream"

by Eric Halamka

The dream is a wheel is a lover is a blade  
I scream at the bloodied hands of fate  
For one too humble  
    too arrogant  
    too understanding  
Her shivering death drenched in steaming pools of irony





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# Eden Damnation

by Edward Romero

With conversation held like porcelain  
Willing it not to break  
With false allusion to the book of prophets  
You were the sinner, I was the snake

More personal than any dream  
More comforting than lies  
A million questions never asked  
I lost my soul behind your eyes

With a shaking voice like a shaking hand  
With a loaded gun  
I searched for something more to say  
To mend the damage done

More personal than any dream  
More dangerous than this  
Just one second, just one chance  
Words not said are never missed



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# Just to Say

by Kathy Megauck

I have taken  
the car  
that was in  
the garage

and which  
you were probably  
going to take out  
tonight.

Forgive me,  
it was so tempting,  
so clean  
and full of gas.

---

# Rage

by Mark Hoewisch

Racing across the sky,  
clouds screamed fury.  
Rolling viciously, churning,  
boiling masses of  
black hate.  
The earth whimpered before  
the ominous monster.  
Whimper it did.  
Trees bowed;  
the living hid.  
But...  
the lake fought.  
Became an inky nothingness;  
pure rebellion.  
Swallowing everything.  
the raging demon poured  
into its gaping mouth.



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# THE HIGHWAY

by K.C. Lazzari

This river runs strong  
from the city. Its course  
flows straight as an arrow,  
of asphalt as black  
as an old wound  
sliced deep through the heart  
of the land. Its swift current  
we've damned, but the murderous flow  
doesn't stop -  
and the small life lies crushed  
on its shores.

---

## FRIENDS OF THE ARTS

Twilight concerts on the banks of the Black River, children's theater, the Marge Boal Drama Festival, Art in Public Places, Patterns, along with other ARTS ALIVE! activities at the college are benefits derived from contributions made to Friends of the Arts. These many and varied activities at the college provide an important cultural link with the community. Through the generosity of its donors, the Friends of the Arts brings to the students of St. Clair County Community College the opportunity to experience art, music, theater, literature and writing bridging academic and vocational programs with social awareness and human understanding. The arts are the means by which we preserve our culture, and extend our values to succeeding generations.

Throughout history the various creative arts have depended upon the generosity of supporters who recognize their importance for society. Friends of the Arts was formed to enable the various ARTS ALIVE! programs to continue to be a significant component in the liberal education of our community.

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# Eleanor B. Mathews Writing Award

The Eleanor B. Mathews Award was established in 1983 to recognize students whose writing submitted to the annual **PATTERNS** competition "exhibits outstanding creativity, technical skill, and individual style." Eleanor B. Mathews was a well-loved instructor of English at St. Clair County Community College as well as a published poet. The judges of **PATTERNS** are pleased to present this year's award to two distinguished writers: Kathleen McConnell and Diane Ramey.

Kathleen McConnell is an outstanding writer in both creativity and technical style. She is versatile as she has won awards in **PATTERNS** in categories of short story, literary essay, and poetry. Her astute judgements about literature are evident in her essays about Tillie Olson's "I Stand Here Ironing" and Wilfred Owen's moving World War I poem, "Dulce et Decorum Est." In her poetry and short stories, she begins from her own experiences and creates realistic characters in vivid language. Her poetry is full of lovely imagery. Kathleen has been writing "little stories" since she was a child and says that she is compelled to write: "It's a matter of self-expression that I **have** to do."

Kathy lives in St. Clair with her husband Ron and their three children: Jeff (20), David (17), and Bridget (10). She runs a business at home called "The Oval Office," a secretarial service that specializes in resumes. She also writes feature articles for a local independent paper, **The Extra Newspaper**. In her free time, she enjoys drawing, painting, and yoga. Kathleen is a busy mother, student, and writer. After graduation from SCCCC, Kathleen plans to transfer to Wayne State University to become a secondary education teacher, majoring in English and minoring in business.

Kathleen McConnell is an original thinker, and ideal student, and a beautiful writer who truly lives up to the standards of Eleanor B. Mathews; she is most deserving of this Award.

Diane Ramey recently completed her studies here at St. Clair County Community College and is currently attending Oakland University. Actually, this is the second time that Diane has taken a series of courses here. In the late 70's Diane received an Associates Degree in Business. She went on to attain a bachelor's degree in that field. It was at that time that she had Eleanor Mathews for English 102. In fact it was during that class that Diane, reluctantly, wrote her first short story as an assignment. Recently, Diane stated that she would have been surprised then to be told that someday she would win the Eleanor Mathews award for her writing.

Today, Diane writes both short stories and poetry; she has been published in several **PATTERNS** issues. In 1988 she took both first and second place honors for short stories. Diane was also the recipient of the 1990 Faculty Memorial award. Her writing often centers on the psychological aspects of her characters.

An excellent student, Diane brings to the classroom a careful, analytical style as she offers her insights during discussion. This trait will serve her well as she makes a career change from business to psychology. She is working toward a doctorate in clinical psychology. The college is proud to honor Diane Ramey and Kathleen McConnell, outstanding students and writers



# ART AND DESIGN AWARD WINNERS

|                                                           |                           |         |
|-----------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------|---------|
| Cover Design .....                                        | <i>Brad Herbert</i>       |         |
| Back Alley Blues .....                                    | <i>Joe Foster</i>         | Page 7  |
| William.....                                              | <i>Ruth Ann Messing</i>   | Page 10 |
| New York .....                                            | <i>Mike Stapleton</i>     | Page 13 |
| Port Huron Pictographs .....                              | <i>Kate McCarthy</i>      | Page 14 |
| Philosophical Abstraction of Our Escapade in Mexico ..... | <i>Yann Cloarec</i>       | Page 15 |
| Design .....                                              | <i>Tom Kettlewell</i>     | Page 19 |
| Woman .....                                               | <i>Terry Cowper</i>       | Page 23 |
| Communication Arts Logo .....                             | <i>Jeff Kahn</i>          | Page 25 |
| A Rose Is A Rose.....                                     | <i>Lisa Gray</i>          | Page 29 |
| Public Enemy.....                                         | <i>Will Briendnich</i>    | Page 32 |
| Marilyn.....                                              | <i>Louis Rodriguez</i>    | Page 38 |
| Polish Time Piece .....                                   | <i>Linda Harmon</i>       | Page 43 |
| Man .....                                                 | <i>Yann Cloarec</i>       | Page 44 |
| Repetition .....                                          |                           | Page 47 |
| Perspective.....                                          | <i>Libbie Vaughn</i>      | Page 48 |
| Interiors .....                                           |                           | Page 51 |
| Spiral Staircase .....                                    | <i>Kelli Krenke</i>       | Page 52 |
| View of Dearborn .....                                    | <i>Cathee Roehrig</i>     | Page 53 |
| Untitled .....                                            | <i>Libbie Vaughn</i>      | Page 55 |
| Interior Design .....                                     | <i>Lanette Pierskalla</i> | Page 56 |
| Perspective.....                                          | <i>Libbie Vaughn</i>      | Page 58 |
| Searching .....                                           | <i>Joanne Parmann</i>     | Page 59 |
| Chris .....                                               | <i>Ruth Ann Messing</i>   | Page 63 |
| This Old House .....                                      | <i>Lisa Gray</i>          | Page 64 |
| Cold Hearted .....                                        | <i>Kevin Warsinski</i>    | Page 67 |
| Reflection .....                                          | <i>Kelli Krenke</i>       | Page 71 |
| Water Fowl Logos .....                                    | <i>Paul Dietzel</i>       | Page 78 |
| Bronson .....                                             | <i>Sherrie Hyslop</i>     | Page 80 |
| Someone's House .....                                     | <i>Cathee Roehrig</i>     | Page 82 |
| Organic Sink.....                                         | <i>Michele Falls</i>      | Page 86 |
| Fragments.....                                            | <i>Tracy Osward</i>       | Page 89 |
| Dragon .....                                              | <i>Terry Cowper</i>       | Page 91 |
| Chicago.....                                              | <i>Mark Hill</i>          | Page 92 |
| Perception.....                                           | <i>Michael Stapleton</i>  | Page 94 |
| Atmosphere .....                                          | <i>Sherrie Teets</i>      | Page 97 |

